NAGINATA

The Definitive Guide

By Alexander Bennett

KW

This book is dedicated
to the memory of

Kawamori Keiko

(19 October 1948 ~ 29 December 2002)

Managing Director- International Naginata Federation
Managing Director- All Japan Naginata Federation
Director- Japan Olympic Committee
Honorary Hanshi
4th Class Order of Merit

By the age of 54, she had done so much for so many, and being in her prime, had so much more to do. Her untimely death was a great tragedy for the Naginata world. She led by example, and it is for us to continue developing what she worked so hard for.

Recommendation

This long awaited English language publication on Naginata is the result of many years of effort and research by Dr. Alex Bennett.

This book will surely become the standard reference for people who have been studying outside of Japan until now, as well as for people who are considering starting Naginata. The International Naginata Federation is unreserved in highly recommending this important book.

As a non-Japanese who has extensively researched traditional Japanese culture and possesses a deep understanding of Japanese *budo*, I sincerely believe that his insights gleaned through actual experience will serve to greatly facilitate the spread of Naginata on an international scale greater than ever before. As Alex possesses profound knowledge of Japanese culture, he is able to convey not only the technical aspects of Naginata, but also the important spiritual and historical aspects in a way that is easily comprehensible to non-Japanese enthusiasts.

As I am still only a beginner, my experience of Naginata is not at a level to warrant my writing of this recommendation. However, in my capacity as President of the International Naginata Federation, I am extremely honoured to have been asked to make a contribution to this publication. This book will become an indispensable reference for instructors and students alike. It is my dire wish that it is used to encourage as many people as possible around the world to engage in Naginata, and to learn the fundamentals of the art as accurately and true to its beautiful form as possible.

Hashimoto Kumiko

President
International Naginata Federation

Introduction

Compared to other *budo* arts in Japan, Naginata is comparatively small in terms of the number of practitioners. Considered mainly a martial art for women, and being predominantly administered by women, there are limited resources such as access to corporate sponsorship to help propagate Naginata. In other martial arts federations in Japan such as Kendo and Judo, men occupy the leading administrative posts, and often have direct links with companies or other organisations that can offer financial support. Unfortunately, Japan is a country where women still generally do not have such high standing or links with industry or politics. As a result, Naginata federations often have to make do with extremely limited financial reserves to continue popularising the art. Limited finance is a fact of life for Naginata in Japan and also for the affiliate nations of the International Naginata Federation.

Thus, there are few funds available to create teaching materials such as books or instructional videos. In fact, compared to other *budo*, there is a serious dearth of Naginata reference materials in Japanese, let alone any other language. This problem is not considered such a pressing issue in Japan due to the number of highly ranked and experienced instructors. This cannot be said, however, of countries outside Japan. Even in France or the United States where there are a handful of highly ranked Naginata teachers, most practitioners have to make do with only interim instruction, and for most of the time are left to their own devices until the next regional or international training seminar is scheduled. This leaves the practitioner in the precarious position of developing bad habits, or even losing enthusiasm and giving up altogether.

Of the handful of books on Naginata that do exist, most are prewar Japanese textbooks that are for the most part irrelevant to the popular form of *Atarashii Naginata* developed in the post-war period. Post-war Naginata books are scant, and usually only cover the same basic techniques. Very little information is offered in regards to the cultural, historical, and mental aspects of Naginata. It requires a concerted effort to find such information in Japanese books, and to date, apart from a few journal articles, there has

been virtually no work done in these areas in English or any other language. Until now, Naginata practitioners around the world have been left almost completely in the dark with regards to how the modern art that we practise today actually evolved and took its current form, in a process that spanned over one thousand years.

The purpose of this book is three-fold. Firstly it is an attempt to start filling the gap of knowledge concerning the history and philosophical aspects of Naginata. The information contained in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 is by no means exhaustive, and it is hoped by the author that it will provide impetus for other researchers of *budo* culture and history to build on and improve what little has been written to date.

Secondly, it will serve as a reference for instructors and beginners alike in the techniques of Naginata. Much of the technical information is based on my previous translation of *Sports V Course Naginata* published by the INF. I have also added more detail to the original text, including explanations of concepts found in the *Naginata Handbook* (revised edition 2004), a pamphlet published by the All Japan Naginata Federation for the benefit of people sitting grading examinations. Furthermore, the appendices at the end were included to assist middle to high ranked practitioners for reviewing refereeing, grading examinations, Kata, vocabulary, and so forth.

Thirdly, all the profits from this book will be donated to the International Naginata Federation. It is hoped that sales will generate enough revenue to help hold international events and create teaching materials to help continue developing Naginata internationally. Please keep this in mind and encourage your Naginata colleagues to contribute to the prosperity of Naginata by buying this book!

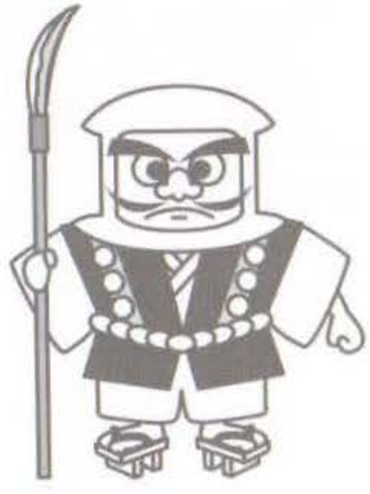
Finally, the author would like to thank the following people for their help in bringing this book to fruition: Taishukan Publishing for allowing the use of some of the photos, diagrams, and text contained in *Sports V Course Naginata*. Kimura Yasuko for her technical guidance and support. The students of the International Budo University Naginata Club for serving as models for many of

the technical photos. Ikeda Emiko for her photography services. Shishikura 'Kan' Masashi for his excellent Benkei illustrations, cover design, and also the many hours he spent editing the photos. Bryan Peterson and Hamish Robison for their proof reading and editing services. And finally, the INF president and officers for their support of this project.

* Conventions Used in this Book

Inevitably in a book of this nature there are many Japanese terms. All Japanese words are italicised, however, I have refrained from using macrons except in the glossary of terms at the back. 'Naginata' capitalised and not in italics refers to the *budo* art itself, and '*naginata*' in lower case italics is used in reference to the actual weapon. Any Japanese noun that is capitalised indicates that it is an official set of techniques, school, organisation, or title. For example, 'Shikake-Oji' refers to the actual predetermined set of eight set forms, and '*shikake*' and '*oji*' are used in regards to attacking and counter-attacking. Similarly '*kata*' refers to the generic term for set forms, and 'Kata' to the official All Japan Naginata Federation forms. Japanese names are written with the surname first followed by given names.

Alexander C. Bennett Ph.D
Director & Technical Committee Member
International Naginata Federation
Kyoto, 2005



Chapter 1:

What is Naginata?

A scene depicted in Ishiyamadera engi emaki (1324-1326)
(The illustrated scrolls of the founding of the Ishiyama temple)
Stored in the Ishiyama temple

Part 1- The History of Naginata

1. Origins

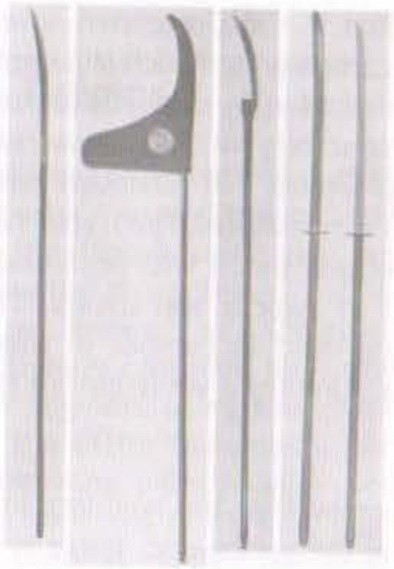
The word *naginata* first started to make an appearance in historical literature around the mid-Heian period (794-1185). For example, in the *Honchoseiki*[1] the *naginata* was expressed phonetically using the characters 奈木奈多. Other texts such as the *Wamyosho* (also known as *Shitagau-ga-Wamyo*)—a Chinese-Japanese dictionary compiled by Minamoto no Shitagau in 934—mentions the *naginata* using the characters 長刀 (long sword). However, by the latter Muromachi period (1333-1568), the characters 薙刀(mowing sword) were used more frequently and represented the sweeping or mowing motion of the *naginata* when employed to slash at human foe or the horses they were riding. These characters were also utilised to make a distinction between long swords which were also being employed in battle at the time. The *Wakan sansai-zue* (Japanese-Chinese illustrated assemblage of the three components of the universe) was an illustrated encyclopaedia edited by Terashima Ryoan (dates unknown), an Osaka physician. It was completed in 1712 mentions the *naginata* using yet another set of characters 奈伎那太 although this usage is very uncommon.[2]

Emaki-mono scene from the Go-sannen-no eki.
(Tokyo National Museum)

It is difficult to ascertain exactly when and why the *naginata* came into existence, but we can confirm through picture scrolls (*emaki-mono*) that they were used by warriors in the *Go-sannen-no-eki* or Later Three Years' War, a military campaign in which Minamoto no Yoshiie subdued the wayward Kiyohara family of north-eastern Japan between 1083 and 1087. In these scrolls we can see warriors flailing weapons that look similar to swords but obviously have longer and wider blades with greater curvature. They also had long shafts and were able to cut, mow, and thrust with both ends, thus retaining all the characteristics of swords and spears. The fact that they are depicted as being used in combat in these battles suggests that they had been around for a while before the eleventh century.

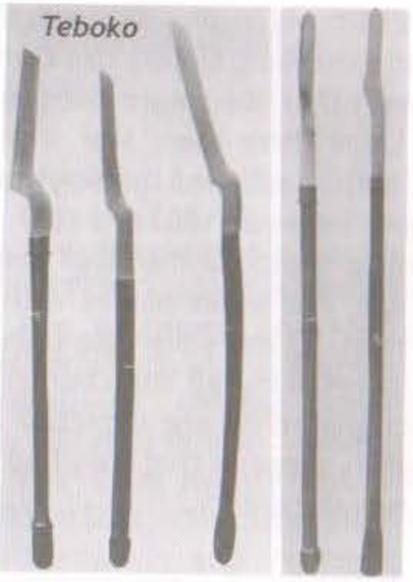
Although some authorities have suggested that the *naginata* may have derived from the Chinese glaive, the *guang-dao*, there is no substantial proof of this.[3] The majority of scholars conclude that the Japanese *naginata* is indigenous to Japan, although there are a number of differing theories of how it evolved. The first known types to appear were the *tsukushi-naginata* from the northern Kyushu region. These were simply curved blades (approximately 58cm in length) attached to wooden shafts. Another early prototype, although extremely rare, was the *nata-naginata*. Again, this was simply a blade attached to a wooden shaft with a socket. These prototypes looked very much like agricultural implements rather than weapons *per se*, and they probably served a dual function for farmer-warriors who had to contend with raiding bands of Emishi—the aboriginal tribal peoples who had once inhabited the entire Japanese archipelago but had retreated northward by the eighth century after military invasions by the Yamato state.[4]

Another possibility, although difficult to prove, was that the *naginata* evolved from the *teboko*, a weapon developed during the Nara period (710-794). *Teboko* were relatively short light weapons where oddly shaped blades are embedded in thick wooden shafts. There are few examples left in existence. There are five still remaining in the Shosoin in Nara, and it is unknown whether they were designed for combat or ceremonial purposes.

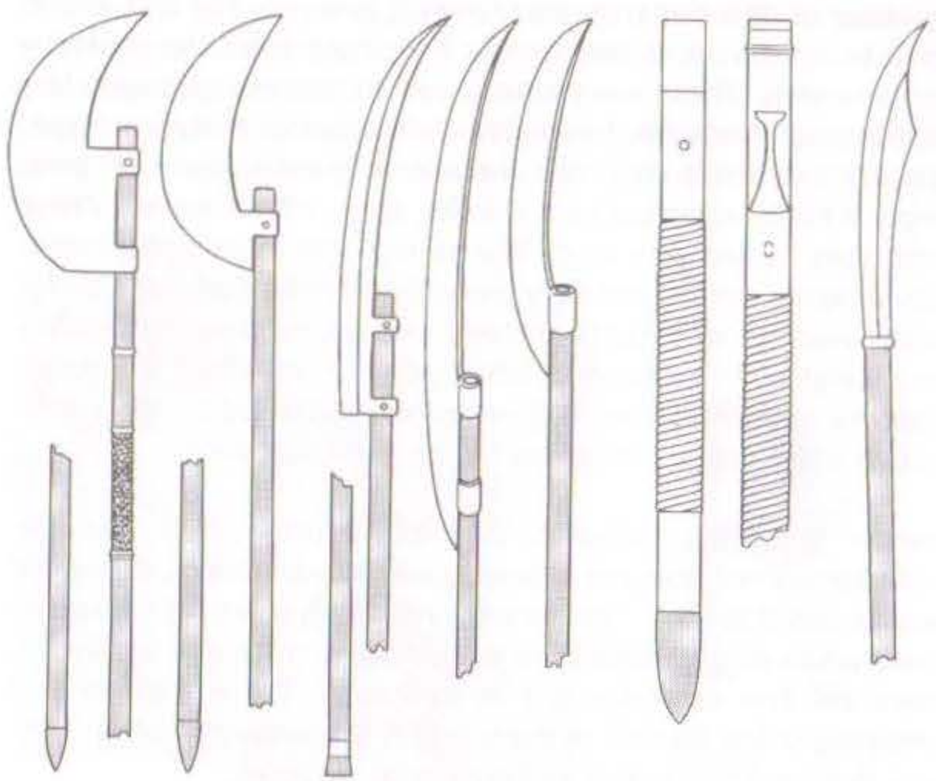


Nata-naginata

Tsukushi-naginata



Naginata and shafts from the Kamakura period

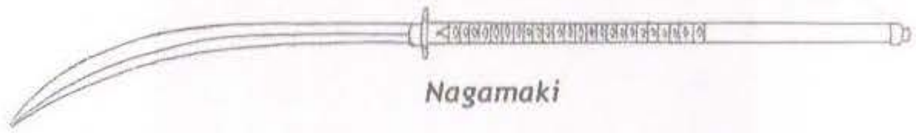


Mitamura Kunihiko "Dai Nihon Naginata-do Kyohan" (1939)

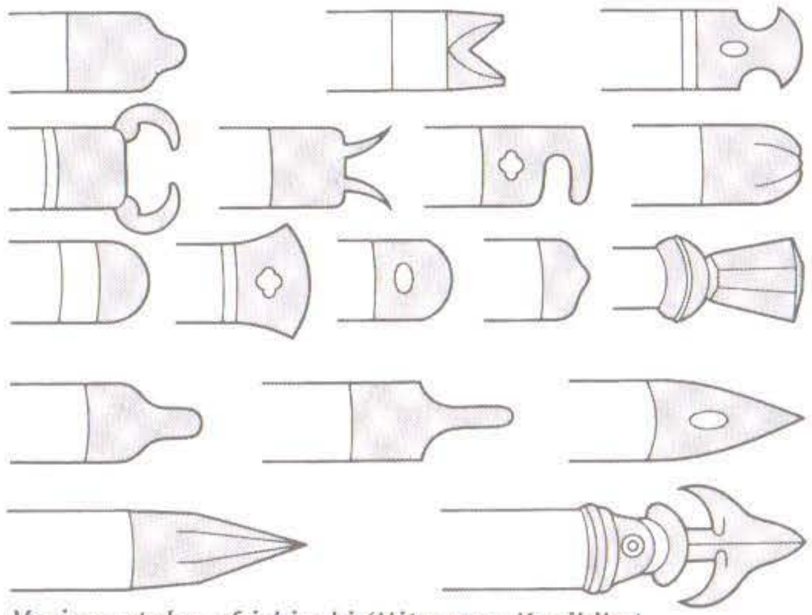
Perhaps the most plausible theory for the development of the *naginata* suggests that they were improvised weapons made by simply attaching a *tachi* (sword) onto a shaft, possible a broken spear (*hoko*). It was a simple concept, but extremely effective for slashing and stabbing at horses safely from behind barricades. Whatever the origins, by the middle of the eleventh century, the use of these Japanese glaive-like weapons had become widespread particularly among warrior-monks (*sohei*), and foot soldiers or lower-ranking *bushi*. Furthermore, by this stage, the *naginata* had developed into a sturdy weapon of good balance and a superb tang-blade forged in the same method as swords of the day. The shafts were generally 1.2 to 2.4 meters in length and the curved blade usually 30 to 60 centimetres long. The tangs were inserted in the oval oak shafts, secured with bamboo pegs (*mekugi*), and then bound tightly with cords and metal rings.

The butt end of the shaft was also an important feature of the *naginata's* effectiveness. Known as the *ishizuki* (stone stabber), the butt was usually capped with metal in various shapes and sizes and this served as a kind of bludgeoning device, particularly lethal to de-horsed *bushi* trying to get to their feet again. Thus, the *naginata* was used in two ways: To slash at the legs of horses and stab the riders with the bladed end from a relatively safe distance, and also for close-quarters fighting and downward thrusts on fallen foe with the *ishizuki* end.

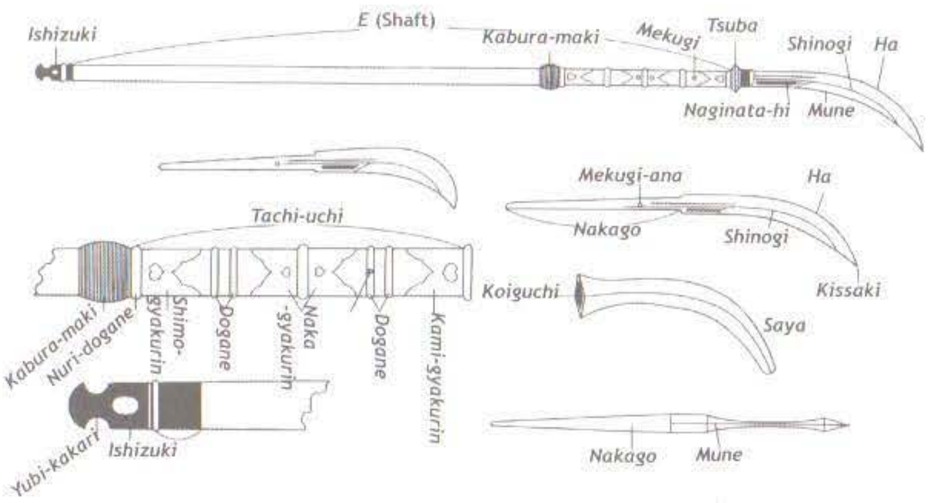
At first, *naginata* had relatively straight and thin blades, but they became increasingly thicker and longer with more pronounced curvature. In the fourteenth century a similar weapon, the *nagamaki*, came into use. The *nagamaki* had a longer blade than the standard *naginata*, but a shorter staff. Although akin to the *naginata*, it is in fact considered by most scholars to be a different weapon.



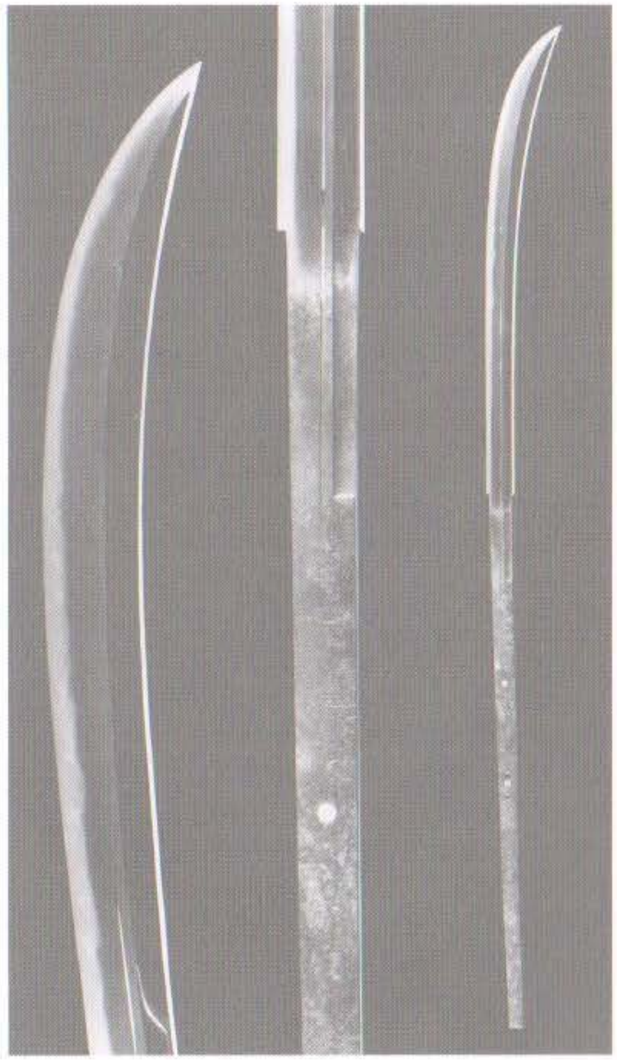
Nagamaki

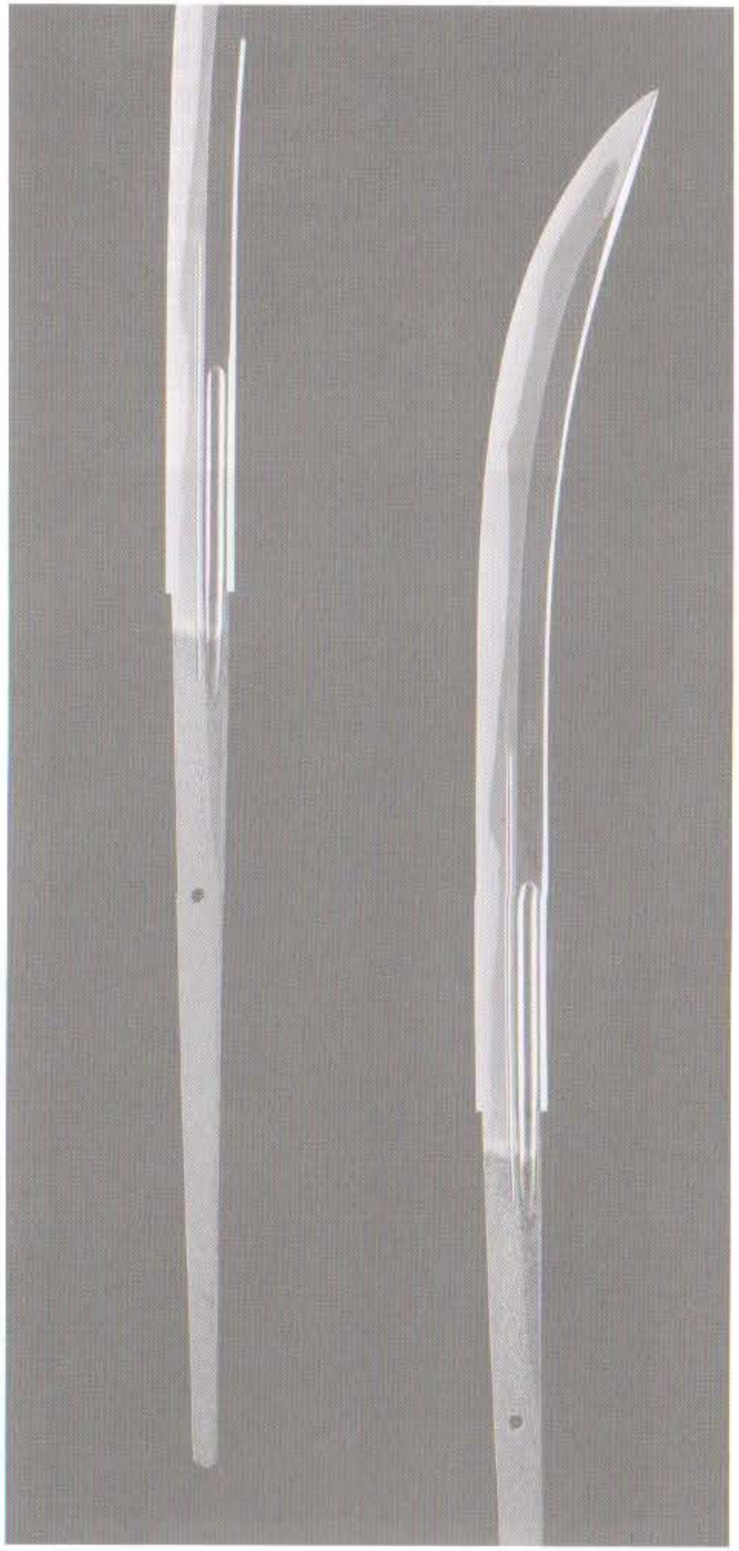


Various styles of ishizuki (Mitamura Kunihiko)



By the fifteenth century onwards, we see the addition of *tsuba* (sword guards) to *naginata* and the blades becoming shorter but wider. The shafts were lengthened making the weapon longer and much heavier than its predecessors. This was when *naginata* generally came to be written with the characters depicting "mowing sword". It was also from this time that the *naginata* became rather ornate with lavish cord-work and metal work designs on the shaft, and sometimes even inlaid with mother-of-pearl. We even see some *naginata* from this period with special perpendicular blade-stopping bars at the top of the shaft called *kagi-naginata*.





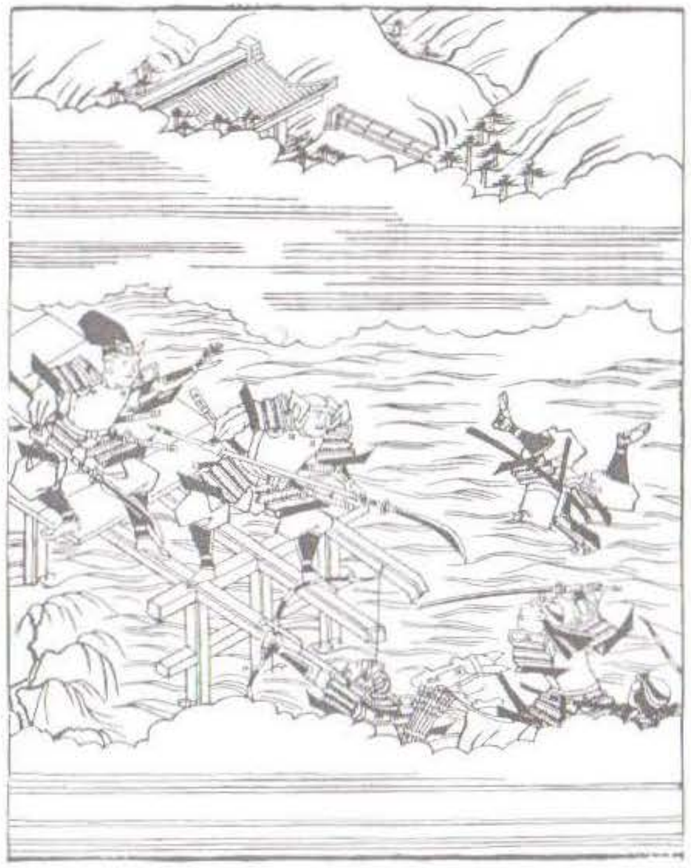
2. The Naginata in Battle

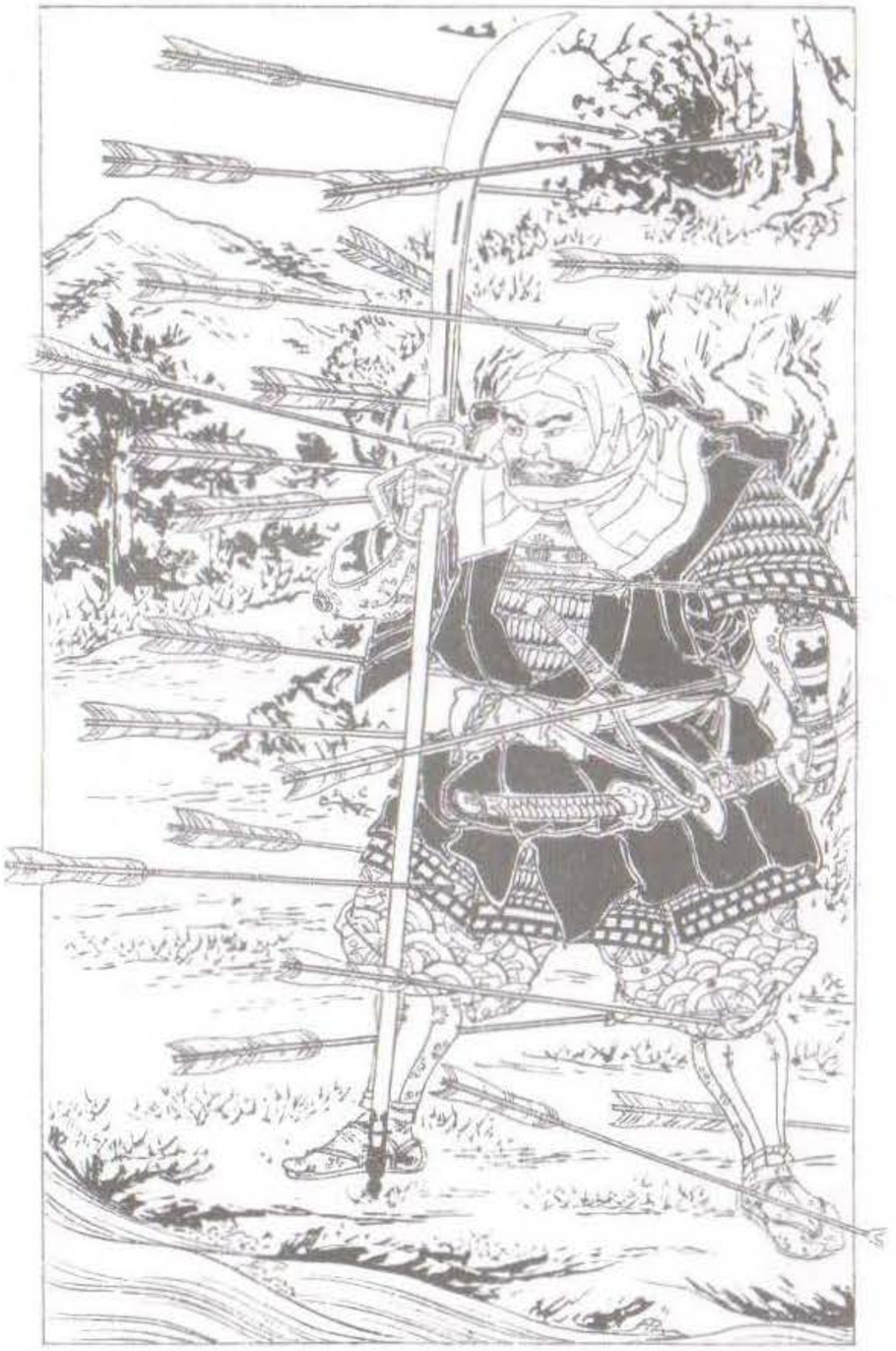
However, despite the continued evolution of the *naginata* over the centuries, its heyday as a battlefield weapon was during the Gempei Wars, a conflict between two warrior leagues, one under the Taira family and the other under the Minamoto family lasting from 1180 to 1185, and the turbulent times immediately before and after.

We can see how extensively the *naginata* was used by referring to literature such as the *Heike monogatari* (*The Tale of the Heike*).[5] This was the most important of the Kamakura and Muromachi period tales known collectively as *gunki monogatari*, or "war tales" and it deals with the rise and fall of the Taira family. This includes the twenty years following the Hogen Disturbance of 1156 and the Heiji Disturbance of 1160, when they not only defeated their rivals the Minamoto family, but also overthrew the Fujiwara family from its dominant position at court, and also the five years of the Gempei War. The *Heike monogatari* contains many thrilling scenes of battle telling of the brave and valorous deeds of *bushi* who were intensely proud of their lineage and military prowess, and supposedly prized honour, loyalty, and valour above life itself. For example, the following is taken from "The Battle at the Bridge" (*Hashi-gassen)* in Helen McCullough's translation of the *Tale of the Heike*. Note that in her translation, she refers to *naginata* (長刀) as "spear".[6] I took the liberty of changing it back to *naginata* in the following quote:

> "Jomyo Meishu of Tsutsui, one of the worker-monks, was attired in a dark blue *hitatare*, a suit of black-laced armour, and a five-plate helmet. At his waist, he wore a sword with a black lacquered hilt and scabbard; on his back, there rode a quiver containing twenty-four arrows fledged with black eagle-wing feathers. Grasping a lacquered, rattan-wrapped bow and his favourite long, plain-handled *naginata*, he advanced onto the bridge and announced his name in a mighty voice.
>
> 'You must have heard of me long ago. See me now with your own eyes! Everyone at Miidera knows me! I am the worker-monk Jomyo Meishu from Tsutsui, a warrior worth a

thousand men. If any here consider themselves my equals, let them come forward. I'll meet them!' He let fly a fast and furious barrage from his twenty-four-arrow quiver, which killed twelve men instantly and wounded eleven others. Then, with one arrow left, he sent the bow clattering away, untied and discarded the quiver, cast off his fur boots, and ran nimbly along a bridge beam in his bare feet. Others had feared to attempt the crossing: Jomyo acted as though it were Ichijo or Nijo Avenue. He mowed down five enemies with his *naginata* and was engaging a sixth when the blade snapped in the middle. He abandoned the weapon and fought with his sword. Hard-pressed by the enemy host, he slashed in every direction, using zigzag, interlacing, crosswise, dragonfly reverse, and waterwheel manoeuvres. After cutting down eight men on the spot, he struck the helmet top of a ninth so hard that the blade snapped at the hilt rivet, and slipped loose into the river. Then he fought on desperately with a dirk as his sole resource."[7]





BENKEI'S LAST BATTLE.

Reprinted from James S. de Benneville's 1910 publication, Saito Musashi-bo Benkei

Although many warriors of the period used the *naginata* in battle, there are a few historical figures that have remained synonymous with the weapon. Of these, undoubtedly Musashibo Benkei (?-1189) is the most celebrated. He was a legendary warrior-monk and loyal retainer of the tragic hero Minamoto no Yoshitsune. Although a historical figure named Benkei is briefly mentioned in the text *Azuma kagami* (ca 1266-1301), the only detailed accounts of his life are almost entirely fictional. According to these accounts, however, Benkei was an extraordinarily cunning man, who was strong and highly skilled in the martial arts. Benkei armed with his *naginata* accompanied Yoshitsune through all the campaigns of the Taira-Minamoto War. After the war, the paranoid Minamoto no Yoritomo, fearing his brother's popularity as a threat to his power, turned against Yoshitsune who was forced to flee with Benkei. When they were finally surrounded, Benkei fought alone to the death, but managed to buy enough time for Yoshitsune to commit an honourable suicide, rather than be slaughtered at the hands of his numerous enemies. Benkei's loyalty and courage are depicted in several noh and *kabuki* plays and television dramas, and he remains a popular figure to this day.

Although the *naginata* is now known as a weapon predominantly used by women, it is very difficult to find literature depicting women using the weapon in battle in the conventional sense. Although rare, there are a couple of celebrated women warriors who grace the texts of some *gunki monogatari*. The most famous of these women warriors were Tomoe Gozen and Hangaku Gozen (sometimes referred to as Itagaki). "Gozen" means literally "one who is in attendance before an august person". The title could be applied to a lady of good family—the head of the family being of course male—or maybe a singing girl. Interestingly, for both of these women the *naginata* did not seem to be their main weapon. In Hangaku Gozen's case, she is recorded as being a tremendous archer. When she was besieged in a fortress in 1201, Hangaku reputedly slew countless enemies by shooting from a tower above the fortifications. But there is no mention of Hangaku ever having ridden in battle, or wielded a sword or *naginata*.

According to the *Heike monogatari*, Tomoe Gozen accompanied Yoshinaka when he took flight to Kyoto in 1184. When Yoshinaka was in danger of capture by his encroaching enemies, Tomoe was

urged to leave to save him from the embarrassment that a woman was with him. Tomoe refused to go until she had taken an enemy head and proved that her martial prowess was equal to that of any man. Eventually she escaped, and is said to have remarried or lived as a nun.

> "...Tomoe was especially beautiful, with white skin, long hair, and charming features. She was also a remarkably strong archer, and as a swords-woman she was a warrior worth a thousand, ready to confront a demon or a god, mounted or on foot. She handled unbroken horses with superb skill; she rode unscathed down perilous descents. Whenever a battle was imminent, Yoshinaka sent her out as his first captain, equipped with strong armour, an oversized sword, and a mighty bow; and she performed more deeds of valour than any of his other warriors." (*Tale of the Heike*)

Tomoe Gozen
(Tokyo National Museum)

Here, there is no reference to her using a *naginata* even though many of the pictures depicting her show her holding one. Furthermore, the Chofukuji temple in Nagano prefecture owns a *naginata* which it claims belonged to none other than Tomoe herself. This is highly unlikely and is refuted by most scholars, but the temple continues to strongly advocate this theory. Only Tomoe would ever know! Whatever the case, it was very rare indeed for women to join men on the battlefield. If any of the stories of the legendary Tomoe are even remotely true, she would have been a formidable foe regardless of what weapon she used.

3. Warring States Period

Warriors of the Muromachi period (private collection)

The Muromachi period (1333-1568) was an era of great cultural achievement and widespread social disorder lasting from 1333, when forces led by Ashikaga Takauji destroyed the Kamakura Shogunate, until 1568, when Oda Nobunaga captured the capital of Kyoto. It was during the latter half of the Muromachi period, a time referred to as the Warring States period, that use of the *naginata* waned with the introduction of more regimented fighting strategies utilising *yari*, and also the introduction of firearms.
As we have seen, even though *gunki monogatari* feature feats of bravery with swords and other bladed weapons rather prominently, recent studies by historians suggest that many long held beliefs

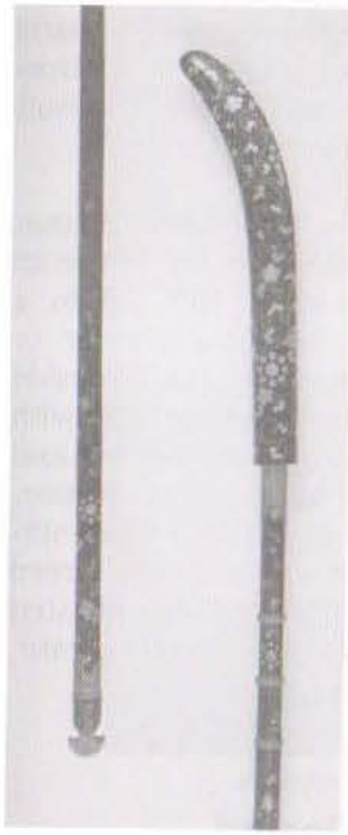
concerning fourteenth-century warfare may be somewhat misconstrued. To back this up, persuasive data from analyses of battle wound statistics compiled from battle reports can be found. For example, Thomas Conlan analysed 1302 documents and catalogued 721 identifiable battle wounds. He ascertained that arrows caused 73% of wounds, while only 25% were the result of sword strokes, and fewer than 2% involved spears. Suzuki Masaya also examined 175 documents, and discovered that while nearly 87% of the 554 identifiable casualties reported came from arrow wounds, 8% from swords or *naginata*, just under 3% were the result of being hit by rocks, and 1% were caused by spear thrusts.[9]

Some historians also put forward convincing arguments that firearms—introduced into Japanese battlefields in the sixteenth century—rendered even heavy armour useless. This led to a change to light-weight armour which enabled the warrior to move with increased speed and agility. However, the downside was that it also left the warrior more vulnerable to attacks with bladed weapons. As Karl Friday points out, guns further induced opposing warriors to close with one another as rapidly as possible. In combination with the enormous armies of the late sixteenth-century, battlefields became crowded, and warriors were forced to engage at closer quarters more than ever before. This boosted the appeal of swords over larger weapons like spears and *naginata*, which required more space to wield effectively. [10]

4. Naginata in the Tokugawa Period

The *naginata* did not die out altogether, however, and was put to effective use as the continued preferred weapon of warrior monks and by women. Women were trained in *naginata-jutsu* obviously not for battlefield use, but as a form of self-defence, and later as a method of self-development from the peaceful Tokugawa period (1600-1868). Women trained mainly in *naginata-jutsu* because of its adaptability against different types of weapons and enemies. Traditionally, it was the women who were entrusted with the responsibility of protecting their homes while the men folk went off to battle, so it was vital that they become skilled in using

weapons that enabled them to defend against physically more powerful adversaries. Bows were one such weapon for obvious reasons. However, when the fighting moved to close-quarters, a woman wielding a *naginata* could keep even the strongest attackers at a distance where advantages of physical strength could be neutralised somewhat.[11]



During the Tokugawa period, the *naginata* became considerably shorter in length and it was predominantly women of *bushi* families who trained in its technique. The *naginata* shafts became very ornate and were often decorated with mother-of-pearl or gold leaf as in the photograph. They became an essential item in the dowry of women from warrior families, often passed on from mother to daughter as family heirlooms.

As with the other martial arts during the Tokugawa period, the bulk of *naginata-jutsu* training centred on the repetition of *kata*. This period provided neither wars nor battles for warriors to test their skills. Having lost the arena of actual combat, practitioners of the martial arts concentrated on the forms. However, they gradually became completely preoccupied with detail and the techniques became increasingly ostentatious to the detriment of combat effectiveness. This trend was held in contempt by purists who described such methods as *kaho kenpo* ("flower-style swordplay"). In order to 'remedy' the situation, new training methods were developed which encouraged spontaneity and full contact cutting rather than the choreographed movements of *kata*.

For this purpose, *bogu* prototypes resembling the protective equipment used in Naginata and Kendo today with bamboo swords and *yari* came on the scene sometime in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the period 1661-1681, multitudes of

martial schools (*ryuha*) came into fruition, and it was from this time in particular that explorations were made into different ways to train by improving pieces of protective armour. This enabled full-contact cuts in training without the concern of training partners killing or maiming each other. However, this was a gradual process of trial and error, and it involved constant improvement of the equipment. The famous military and Confucian scholar Yamaga Soko (1622-85) has left us some interesting references concerning the utilisation of protective equipment in the early Tokugawa period.

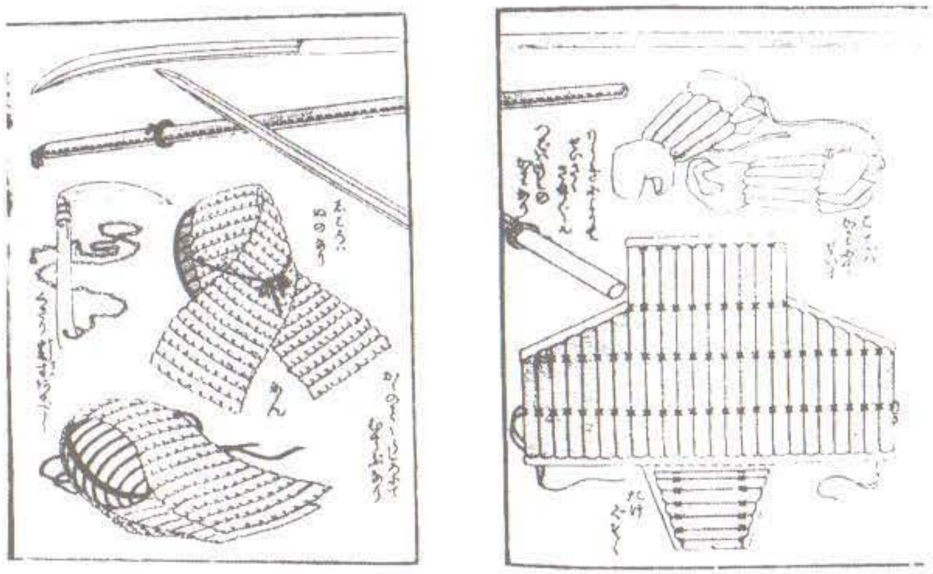
> "In regards to the benefits of the system of training in *kenjutsu* with a *shinai*...adepts used to attach armour, with an iron protective mask, and were able to engage in rigorous mock-combat to their heart's content [without the worry of injury]." [12]

In the second month of 1663, we find reference by Kamiya Denshin Yoriharu, the headmaster of the Jikishin-ryu, in an essay he sent to Osawa Tomoemon concerning the use of protective equipment.

> "In the trainings conducted at other schools, leather armour is worn accompanied with various other pieces of equipment including face masks. In the Jikishin-ryu, however, we do not ask that such equipment be utilised..."

Accordingly, we can determine from this passage that several unnamed schools other than the Jikishin-ryu engaged in combat training aided by safety equipment from the early Tokugawa period onwards. In 1682, a collection of illustrations sketched by Hishikawa Moronobu titled *Chiyo no tomozuru* depicts two young warriors wielding safety-tipped *yari* (spear) engaged in a contest with another young warrior equipped with *men* (face-mask), *do-tare* (body armour), and a *naginata*.[13]

It is obvious from this illustration that *naginata-jutsu* was practised in the same manner as *kenjutsu* and *sojutsu*. However, there are no records that I can find of *bushi* who travelled the country seeking challenges (*musha shugyo*) with the *naginata* as their specialist weapon. Obviously, the techniques of *naginata-jutsu* were still studied, but it seems that for the most part they were studied in order to counter the *naginata*, not so much to utilise it as the primary weapon.



Naginata, shinai, bokuto, kusarigama, and bogu depicted in "Hokusai manga" (1817)

A study of the *ryuha* of the Tokugawa period shows virtually no schools that specialised solely in the *naginata*. For example, the 1717 publication *Honcho bugei shoden*——a comprehensive almanac of martial *ryuha*——contained volumes pertaining

to *heiho* (or *hyoho*——military science and strategy), *shorei* (etiquette), *shajutsu* (archery), *bajutsu* (horsemanship), *tojutsu* (sword), *sojutsu* (spear), *hojutsu* (gunnery), *kogusoku* (grappling with & without weapons), and *jujutsu* (grappling), but nothing at all dedicated to *naginata-jutsu*. Again, another reference book published in 1844, *Shinsen bujutsu ryuso-roku*, only mentions the *naginata-jutsu* techniques included in Anazawa-ryu, Sen'i-ryu, and Masaki-ryu under the *sojutsu* heading. The well-known tradition Tendo-ryu (one of the main surviving Naginata traditions today) is also mentioned, but in the *kenjutsu* section, and no mention is even made to its *naginata* techniques.[14]

The synthesised martial traditions such as Shinto-ryu (Anazawa-ryu), Nen-ryu, Araki-ryu, Yoshin-ryu and so on do have *naginata-jutsu* included in their curriculum, but are generally for the benefit of *kenjutsu*, not for the sake of *naginata* itself, and thus are not given much attention by the chroniclers. Traditions which added *naginata-jutsu* to their repertoire later in the Bakumatsu and Meiji periods were not included in these texts.[15]

5. Naginata in the Meiji Period

Even in the turbulent Bakumatsu period and Meiji Restoration (1868), traditional weapons such as the *naginata* were hardly ever taken to battle. Although not always the case, the Soke (Headmaster) of *ryuha* that did have *naginata-jutsu* continued training in the techniques not so much for combat application, but often just for the sake of keeping that part of the tradition alive.

With the onset of the Meiji period and the imperial restoration, *naginata-jutsu* along with other *bujutsu* fell into an era of decline. Japan's respect for the traditional martial arts was brought to an abrupt end with the arrival of Commodore Perry's 'Black Ships' in Japanese waters in 1853. After centuries of self-imposed isolation (*sakoku*), Japan found itself outdated, out-gunned, and out of its depth compared to Western nations. Although the seclusion from the rest of the world had given the Japanese martial arts time to develop into fascinating martial antiques, rich in ritualistic symbolism and spiritualism, they were no match for the

devastating firepower of Western nations snooping around Japan's shores demanding special rights and privileges. Commodore Perry's arrival woke the Japanese out of their false sense of security, and with the Meiji Restoration, they set about rebuilding the nation by drawing on the latest technology and ideas the West had to offer. This essentially meant that traditional Japanese martial arts such as *kenjutsu* fell into obscurity due to lack of perceived practical application. Guns, cannons, and a new conscript army were the order of the day if Japan was to catch up with the rest of the world. The era abounded with catch phrases such as *Wakon-Yosai* (Japanese Spirit and Western Technology) and *Fukoku-Kyohei* (Enrich the Country and Strengthen the Military) as they strove to educate the masses, arm the nation, and match the West in terms of a new modern civil society.

Depiction of the Shinpuren Rebellion of 1876 where warriors fought against the Westernisation policies of the government in modern-day Kumamoto prefecture—note the warrior wielding a naginata

Naginata-jutsu, along with the other martial arts, was considered symbolic of the now outdated feudal hierarchy which placed the minority *bushi* above all other classes, and was thus relegated to the realms of archaic nonsense with no practical use to the newly emerging modern society. With the abolishment of the Bakufu's military academy the Kobusho in 1866, and the dissolution of *han* (feudal domains) and the *bushi*-controlled *hanko* (domain schools) in 1871, martial arts were no longer included as part of the educational curriculum, which was redesigned on western models to educate the masses rather than the privileged few.

Bushi rapidly lost all of their special privileges, and the final nail in the coffin was the edict denying them the right to wear the item considered the embodiment of their very soul, the *katana*.[16] Many of those from *bushi* stock were cast into a world of unemployment and poverty. Apart from a number of high-ranking *bushi* who were given positions of authority in the organs of Japan's new government, many found themselves without status, employment, or income, and not having any specific trade skills, a significant number were reduced to utter destitution. In the midst of this social upheaval, those hit particularly hard were the *bujutsu* instructors in the employ of the Bakufu or domains, or those who managed their own private *dojo* in the cities. With no stipends any more, and no students in their *dojo*, many subsisted from one day to the next not knowing where their next meal would come from.

Like *kenjutsu*, *naginata-jutsu* just managed to survive through interest maintained in the travelling martial arts demonstrations called *gekiken kogyo* (*gekiken* or *gekken* was another term for *kenjutsu* and *kogyo* means 'demonstration'). The demonstration matches were initiated by Sakakibara Kenkichi—an ex high-ranking Bakufu official and Soke of the Jikishinkage-ryu—as a way to revive *bujutsu* and provide unemployed and destitute martial arts experts with some income in the difficult 1870s and 1880s. *Kenjutsu* exponents provided the majority of fighters, but there were also a small number of women who fought with the *naginata*.

Sakakibara Kenkichi

One of the interesting facets of this initiative was the revolutionary openness of the demonstrations. Until this time, public demonstrations of

Gekiken kogyo scene

bujutsu were unheard of, but in this case fee paying members of the public, regardless of their class background, were encouraged to come and enjoy the spectacle. Furthermore, the fact that any challengers from the public were also welcomed to compete essentially signalled that the closed doors of traditional martial *ryuha* and the *iemoto* system were opened and no longer held as secret. The initiative was to transform *bujutsu* into something not for a select few, but for anybody who was interested. Also, along with *sumo*, the promotion of the traditional martial arts as entertainment for the paying masses also heralded in the age of professional sports in Japan.

Gekiken kogyo was also a major hit with many of the newspapers of the time once word got out that the authorities had given permission to hold such events. The initial coverage by the press served to spread the word far and wide. The interest held by the general public was clearly evident in the first ever *gekiken kogyo* demonstration on April 26, 1873 where people were turned away at the gate well after the venue was already packed beyond capacity.

There is an interesting article in a journal titled *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* (Japan and the Japanese, September 1917) quoting one of the original fighters in the event.

> "...The arena soon filled up so that there was standing room only. The wooden doors were closed and no more spectators

> were admitted. Still, they tried to gain entry by any means possible. This was a cause for great confusion so it was decided to make the venue bigger by 5-*ken* each way for the next day. Early the next morning, just like a scene at a fire, there was a great commotion as it was decided that the stable was to be enlarged. This, it was thought, would certainly solve the problem of overcrowding witnessed the previous day. However, well before the starting time, anxious spectators gathered in front of the arena in droves. And so on the second day as well, we were forced to turn people away at the gates..."

However, there were many problems with the setup which essentially stymied the success of *gekiken kogyo*. Compared to *sumo*, where even people unversed in the intricacies and subtleties of the techniques being employed are still able to easily discern between the victor and the vanquished, *gekiken* demonstration matches left most spectators bewildered. Thus, it was the entertainment factor rather than the actual winner or loser that seemed to hold the most appeal, much in the way pro-wrestling is today. Another major factor weakening the *gekiken kogyo* initiative was the relative commercial inexperience of the ex-*bushi* proprietors. Too many companies or troupes were formed, and this detracted from the overall profitability.

There was also a much discussed downside to the effects of the *gekiken kogyo*. To many critics, it was lamentable to see once proud *bushi* selling their souls and 'prostituting' their martial skills for a quick buck. Also, in the name of entertainment, many of the shows were laced with sensational but hardly practical techniques and sound effects, just as one would expect to see at pro-wrestling events today. This was seen as detracting from the true spirit of *bujutsu* and, to the disgust of many traditional hardliners, also contributed to the subsequent 'sportified bastardization' of the arts. Nonetheless, the historical importance of the *gekiken kogyo* cannot be denied, and in many ways it is thanks to this chapter in history that we still have Naginata today. The *gekiken kogyo* provided a narrow footbridge connecting feudal society with modern society. It was a precarious crossing, and many martial traditions did die out altogether, but it was enough to keep some

interest in traditional *bujutsu* alive just long enough for new possibilities to be explored.

The demonstrations eventually became a recruitment ground for the newly formed police force. What Japan needed during the volatile times which followed the Seinan rebellion[17] were effective police constables, and the government was looking at ways to greatly strengthen its police force. *Gekiken kogyo* venues became the target of scouts who went in search of likely candidates to teach *kenjutsu* to the police. The swordsmen ranking at the top of the programs were well aware of the opportunities that awaited them if they performed well, and one by one the *crème de la crème* found themselves with cushy careers working as *kenjutsu* instructors for the police.

This was a great turn in fortune for some swordsmen, but it essentially spelled the end of *gekiken kogyo*. As the stars of the show found gainful employment in the police, the troupes became depleted in talent, and so too did the interest of the general public. Apart from a few troupes such as that led by Satake Kanryusai who travelled the provinces, all the other stables died a natural death, thus signifying the end of an era.

Gekiken kogyo was in many ways instrumental in the formation of the Kendo and Naginata practised today. For example, the stipulation of court size and weapon length, not to mention the fact that an overseer (referee) was appointed to decide the validity of any points of which the best out of three was deemed the victor. These were all innovations encouraging the competitive flavour of *bujutsu*. As a professional sport it was far from successful, but as a predecessor and catalyst for the future prosperity of what is now enjoyed by exponents around the world, *gekiken kogyo*'s significance cannot be overstated.[18]

6. Naginata and Education

Apart from the newly emerging Meiji police force which eventually discovered that *kenjutsu* was a good way to keep constables in good physical condition, one of most significant possibilities

to be explored was the potential of traditional martial arts as an educational tool. The road to make *bujutsu* accepted into the school curriculum was long and complicated. In the 1870s there were a number of government officials who voiced their inhibitions about totally westernising the education system, and at least wanted to retain certain aspects of 'Japaneseness' in the curriculum. This was especially the case with the physical education curriculum which was centred heavily on Western gymnastics. Some raised the question of why it was not possible to develop a physical education curriculum based on the traditional Japanese *bujutsu* arts. Then again, there were many who were cautious about utilising the martial arts for such purposes.

To investigate the potential benefits and dangers of *bujutsu* in schools, the Ministry of Education instigated a number of official investigations. Of particular note was the 1883 survey done by the National Institute of Gymnastics (Taiso Denshujo), and then the 1896 investigation carried out by the School Health Advisors Board (Gakko Eisei Komonkai). These investigations were focused on the potential of *kenjutsu* and *jujutsu*, but the findings directly influenced Naginata's fate as this was considered the girl's alternative to *kenjutsu*.

The 1883 investigation bore the following conclusions in regards to the pros and cons of *bujutsu* in schools:

1. An effective means of enhancing physical development.
2. Develops stamina.
3. Rouses the spirit and boosts morale.
4. Expurgates spinelessness and replaces it with vigour.
5. Arms the exponent with techniques for self-defence in times of danger.

The dangers were as follows:

1. May cause unbalanced physical development.
2. There is always an imminent danger present in training.
3. It is difficult to determine the appropriate degree of exercise, especially as physically strong students must train together with weaker individuals.
4. Could encourage violent behaviour due to the rousing of the

spirit.
5. Exhilarates the will to fight which could manifest into an attitude of winning at all costs.
6. There is a danger of encouraging a warped sense of competitiveness to the extent that the child could even resort to dishonest tactics.
7. Difficult to sustain unified instructional methodology for large numbers of students.
8. Requires a large area to conduct training.
9. Even though *jujutsu* only requires a *keiko-gi* (training wear), *kenjutsu* requires the use of armour and other special equipment which would be expensive and difficult to keep clean and hygienic.[19]

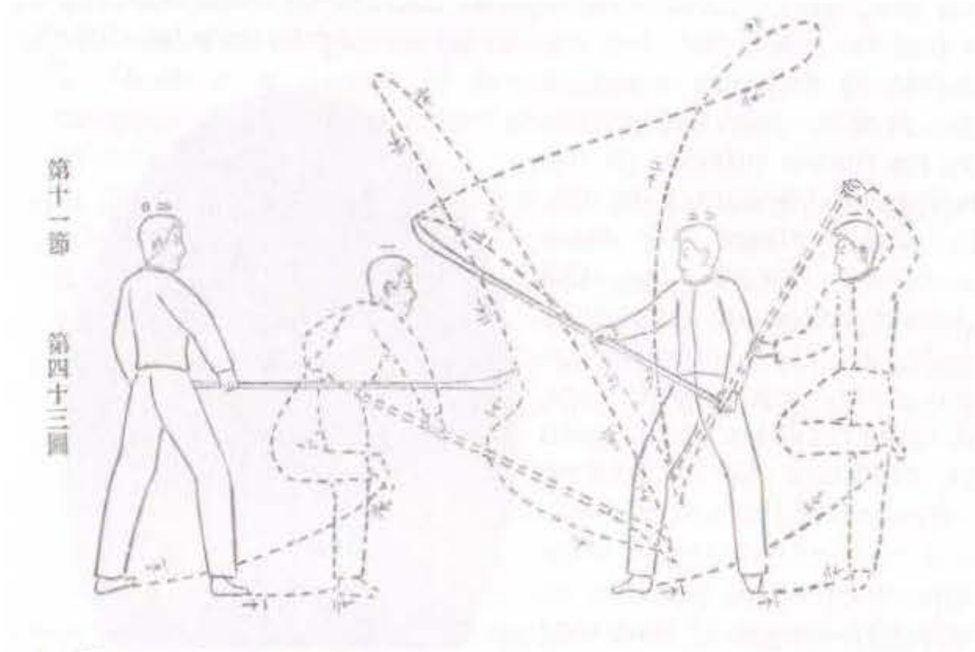
Thus, the conclusion that was finally reached was that it would be inappropriate to introduce *bujutsu* into the school curriculum. On the one hand, it was recognised that as *bujutsu* could be customarily participated in, and it could be beneficial in complementing the knowledge-oriented school system with its emphasis on spiritual development. On the other, it was deemed to run counter to the medical or physiological benefits expected from physical education activities. It was thought to be detrimental to balanced physical development, to encourage violence, to foster antagonistic competition, to be dangerous, to be difficult to find the common medium between styles to coach, expensive, and unhygienic.

Another major problem was the fact that there was no established method for teaching students in a group. Traditionally, *bujutsu* had been taught one on one, and knowledge passed on from teacher to students on an individual basis. In the modern educational environment this was impossible. Thus, there had to be a revolutionary new way to address this particular issue. The first concerted effort to do this resulted in the creation of '*bujutsu* callisthenics' (*bujutsu taiso*).
In 1894 and 1895, during and after the Sino-Japanese war, a number of educators attempted to solve these problems by developing a form of gymnastics utilising martial techniques. The idea soon took on, and before long a number of schools throughout Japan allowed students to participate in newly developed callisthenic exercises using *bokuto* or *naginata*.

One of the main innovators was Ozawa Unosuke. He stated that the purpose of developing *bujutsu* callisthenics was not only as a tool for education, but also to be utilised by members of the public to "nurture a nation of people with physiques by no means inferior to the people of Western nations". He also outlined the many problems faced by the current system of gymnastics such as the difficulty in procuring equipment and suitable facilities which could be overcome by introducing *bujutsu* into the system. As a curricular activity, the *bujutsu*-derived exercises would be an effective means of nurturing physical adeptness, and as an extra-curricular activity it would be an enjoyable form of recreational exercise or games that encourage discipline and overall physical wellbeing.

Ozawa Unosuke holding a naginata

Ozawa had two types of *bujutsu* exercise in mind. They were '*bujutsu* games' (*bujutsu yugi*) and '*bujutsu* callisthenics' (*bujutsu taiso*). In the former he developed *naginata-yugi*, *bojutsu-yugi* (staff), *kenjutsu-yugi*, and *shageki-yugi* (shooting). The latter contained *naginata-jutsu*, *bojutsu*, *kenjutsu*, *sojutsu* (spear), and *kaiken-jutsu* (dagger). These were further categorised into two types of '*bujutsu kata taiso*' based on set forms, and '*bujutsu shiai taiso*' where match play was the focus. He wrote a number of textbooks such as *Budo kairyo kyoju bujutsu taiso-ron* (1896), *Bujutsu taiso-ho* (1897), and *Kaisei naginata taiso-ho* (vols. 1 & 2 1906). With the growing international popularity of the "scientific" gymnastic approach of the Swede Per Henrik Ling, Ozawa introduced a revised version of his *Bujutsu taiso* in a new publication *Kenjutsu kata taiso* (1911). Again, in 1918 he published *Taiiku-ryu kenjutsu naginata-jutsu*. In these books we



An illustration from Ozawa Unosuke's "Naginata taiso-ho" (1903)

Ozawa Unosuke and his students in "Taiiku-teki Naginata-mai" (1904)

can see a significant change in the style of techniques utilised, and the inclusion of more pair work, warm-ups, and even breathing technique.[20]

Apart from Ozawa, there were others also experimenting with developing an indigenous system of gymnastic exercises based on *bujutsu*. Of particular note was Nakajima Kenzo who had studied the Jikishinkage-ryu martial tradition in his childhood. He also wrote a number of books on the subject such as *Naginata taiso-ho* (1909) and *Bokken oyobi Naginata taiso-ho* (1918). It is unknown whether or not Ozawa and Nakajima ever collaborated; however, the efforts of both men saw their initiatives spread throughout the nation with seminars being held in various localities and greeted with considerable enthusiasm. All the same, there were also staunch critics who vehemently opposed the systems. Reasons for opposition were varied, but the most common criticisms were that the techniques utilised were unrealistic and ineffective, paying little attention to *hasuji* (flight or cutting direction of the blade), and that there was too much twisting and turning or ostentatious movement. Many couldn't see the difference between that and baton twirling, another form of popular exercise at the time. Also, with the introduction of more rational innovations in gymnastics, especially from Sweden, many failed to see the point of doing routines with implements such as a *naginata*.

Despite the criticisms, *bujutsu taiso* did prove that *bujutsu* could be practiced or taught in groups quite easily without the need to pair up and without expensive equipment, contrary to previous thought. From this standpoint, it is fair to assert that it had a profound effect on the way instruction methodology for beginners in the martial arts subsequently developed. In this sense, apart from educators such as Ozawa and Nakajima, there was a small number of actual *bujutsu* exponents who either endorsed them, or tried their hand at developing gymnastic-like systems based around their *ryuha* techniques and *kata* as a way to teach beginners. Books of this genre started appearing in the 1890s. From then on a plethora of books was published that were essentially collaborations between educators and martial artists as they learned off each other ways to best adapt *bujutsu* techniques to suit the goals of the physical education curriculum in schools.

It wasn't until 1904-1905 that we see books appearing which were written as *bujutsu* textbooks (as opposed to *taiso*) for teaching beginners, but obviously still heavily influenced by the *taiso* style and methodology.

After decades of confusion and heated debate over what should be taught in the school physical education curriculum, the Ministry of Education eventually issued the *Syllabus of School Gymnastics* (*Gakko taiso kyoju yomoku*) in 1913. This syllabus prescribed the Lingian approach to gymnastics, as was the trend in Great Britain, America, and Scandinavia. This was supplemented with military drill and games (*yugi*), and each school was supposed to devise its own curriculum following the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education. These new guidelines essentially spelled the end of the '*bujutsu* callisthenics' initiatives as *bujutsu* itself was rapidly becoming accepted.

The martial artists started to avoid referring to what they were doing as *bujutsu-taiso* but instead preferred to describe the exercise as "group teaching methodology". In fact, after *bujutsu* was finally accepted into the official school curriculum after 1913 in the above mentioned Syllabus, albeit as an elective activity, many turned face and rained harsh criticism on the earlier *bujutsu-taiso* initiatives as being nothing more than performance exercises with sticks. This was, they asserted haughtily, in no way related to true *bujutsu*. This criticism is not exactly fair. What is also interesting to note is the influence Western gymnastics exerted on the development of *bujutsu-taiso* and then eventually the sought after unified teaching methodology. This point is particularly fascinating when one takes into consideration the modern rhetoric claiming modern *budo* to be traditional Japanese culture. One wonders to what extent 'traditional' means in this context.

Apart from all of these innovations and developments, undoubtedly the formation of the Dai Nihon Butokukai in 1895 was the major turning point in the attempt to popularise the martial arts in schools and the community, and ensured their survival into

the next century and beyond. By this stage, Japan had forged ahead in its quest to modernise, and was starting to embark on expansionist activities with a nationalistic fervour to match any other colonialist power of the day. The Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) encouraged a surge of nationalism in Japan which in turn led to increased interest in *bujutsu*.

Photo of the Butokuden taken in 1899

The year 1895 marked the 1100th year of Kyoto becoming the capital of Japan. At that time Emperor Kanmu is said to have constructed the Butokuden (Hall of Martial Virtue) to promote martial spirit and encourage the warriors to further develop their military prowess. Thus, in commemoration of this, and riding a growing wave of nationalism, the Butokukai was established in Kyoto under the authority of the Ministry of Education and with the endorsement of the Meiji Emperor. Its goals were to promote and standardise the many martial disciplines and systems found throughout the nation. In 1899, the Butokuden was rebuilt near the grounds of the newly constructed Heian shrine in Kyoto.

In 1902, an awards system was created to acknowledge individuals who had worked hard for the promotion of traditional *bujutsu*.

In 1905, a division was established to train *bujutsu* instructors. The content was improved and revised a number of times and in 1911 the Butoku Gakko (School of Martial Virtue) was formed. This became known as the Bujutsu Senmon Gakko (Bujutsu Specialist School) in 1912, and then the Budo Senmon Gakko in 1919 when the term '*bujutsu*' was officially replaced with '*budo*' to emphasise the martial 'way' or spiritual aspects of the martial arts. It was from this time on that the terms '*gekiken*' and '*kenjutsu*' were replaced with 'kendo'. [21]

Thus, the Butokukai was instrumental in the promotion of *budo* through rewarding prominent individuals, training teachers, and holding special events and tournaments. The Budo Senmon Gakko (or *Busen* as it became known) together with the Tokyo Koto Shihan Gakko (Tokyo Higher Normal School) led the way in producing young instructors who would be posted in schools throughout the country to instruct children in the martial arts. In 1904, the Butokukai formed a Naginata Division, and concentrated its efforts to promote Naginata nationally as a martial art primarily for women to train in.

However, it wasn't until the Taisho period (1912-1926) that Naginata came to be officially incorporated into the education system. Most girls' schools were privately operated, but in 1899 a directive on girls' high schools (*Koto jogakko-rei*) provided for the establishment of a secondary education system for girls. All primary school graduates were eligible for entrance, and the course of study was four to five years. Yet education there was designed primarily to make each student a "good wife and wise mother" (*ryosai kenbo*). At a national meeting held in May 1910 by the Ministry of Education concerning issues in girls' education the topic of suitable extracurricular activities was raised. The resulting suggestions were Naginata, swimming, *kyujutsu* (archery), ice-skating, and tennis. The official school curriculum introduced in 1913 allowed for Naginata to be included in middle and higher schools, but only as an extracurricular activity. [22] This remained the case until the 1930s.

Regardless of the inhibitions of the Ministry of Education to elevate Naginata and other martial arts to the status of compulsory subjects across the board, there was a small number of schools that took the initiative and encouraged their students to learn Naginata. For example, Hoshino Shinnosuke, a well-known advocate of *bujutsu* education for girls, started teaching Naginata forms from the Hokushin Itto-ryu and Yagyu-ryu traditions at Tokyo Meiji Girls' School from as early as 1889. In 1897, the above mentioned Ozawa Unosuke started teaching Naginata to senior students at the Tokyo Aijitsu Elementary School where he promoted hybrid exercises utilising techniques from various Naginata traditions.

Other notable examples of Naginata being introduced into schools were Mitamura Akinori, the fourteenth Soke of the Tendo-ryu tradition, who began instruction at Doshisha Girls' School in Kyoto in 1899. In 1901, Yazawa Isako introduced Buko-ryu Naginata into the Physical Education Department of Nihon Women's University. In 1908, Sonobe Hideo, the fifteenth Soke of Jikishinkage-ryu *naginata-jutsu* commenced instruction at Himeji Normal College. Also, starting in 1911 Arai Tsuta taught Naginata techniques that she developed in the Kyoshin-ryu at Nara Women's Normal College for twenty years. [23]

Arai Tsuta and her students at Nara Women's Normal College during winter training (kangeiko)

It was these pioneers who set examples showing the value of teaching Naginata at schools as a form of physical education complementary to Kendo which was taught to boys. This aided in Naginata's eventual inclusion into the school curriculum as an elective subject for girls in higher schools in 1937 (along with Kyudo). Further reforms to the education system in 1942 saw that girls in elementary schools were also subject to compulsory Naginata training. This was the golden era for Naginata as far as number of practitioners is concerned. However, although good for the popularisation of Naginata as a traditional form of culture, it must be remembered that during the 1930's the education system became increasingly nationalistic. In order to enhance nationalistic indoctrination among Japan's youth, textbooks such as the *Kokutai no hongi* (Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan), were compiled for use in the schools, and education became extremely militaristic in nature. *Budo* was considered an effective means of solidifying this military indoctrination, and preparing Japanese youth to fight for their country and Emperor. Naginata, along with Kendo, Kyudo, and Judo was used to advance these goals.

7. Naginata and Militarism

Despite the sudden forced "popularity" of Naginata in the thirties and early forties, there were many logistical problems that had to be overcome. With the official inclusion of Naginata as an elective subject for girls commencing in 1937, a survey was conducted by the Ministry of Education in regards to the number of schools throughout the nation which offered Naginata classes. They found that there had been a significant increase just in the previous few years. According to the report, in 1933 there were no more than 21 schools where Naginata could be practised, but as of 1937 there were 149.

As we can see in table on page 46, the Jikishinkage-ryu had by far the largest number of instructors in schools, followed by Tendo-

ryu. Documents suggest a certain amount of rivalry between the two traditions, which some say still survives to a certain extent today. Apart from that, the most important piece of information that can be gleaned from this table is the acute shortage of actual instructors. The only two Hanshi (awarded by the Butokukai) at the time of the survey were Sonobe Hideo (Jikishinkage-ryu), and Mitamura Chiyo (Tendo-ryu). Considering Naginata was now officially an elective subject in schools, the number of ranked exponents who had the expertise to teach it properly was very scant indeed. This meant that at the time it would have been impossible to elevate Naginata to a compulsory subject, and there was an urgent need to train more instructors to take on teaching responsibilities.

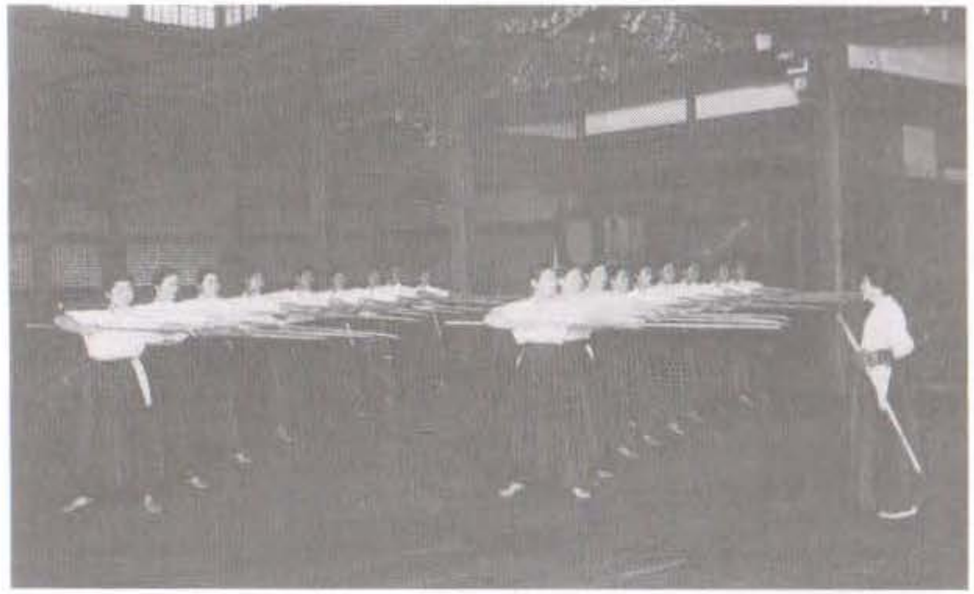
To this end, the Butokukai had already created a teacher's training course for Naginata (Tendo-ryu) in 1934 run by Mitamura Chiyo, Nishigaki Kin, and Mitamura Kunihiko. Similarly, a Jikishinkage-ryu teachers' training college called the Shutokukan was formed in 1936 by Sonobe Hideo. Both of these schools were responsible for training the bulk of Naginata teachers until the end of the war.

Both schools also published detailed textbooks on so-called school Naginata-do (*Gakko Naginata-do*). For example, to promote Tendo-ryu centric *Gakko Naginata-do*, books such as *Dai Nihon Naginata-do kyohan* (1940) and *Joshi budo Tendo-ryu Naginata-jutsu kaisetsu* (1940) were published. Representative books from Jikishinkage-ryu included *Gakko Naginata-do* (1936), *Kokumin gakko Naginata seigi* (1941), *Joshi budo naginata no tsukaikata* (1942) and so on.[25]

The bulk of training in Naginata initially revolved around repetitious *kata* practice. However, as popularity increased so too did the desire to engage in more competitive activities. Kendo had always been very competitive, and although it was generally considered "unladylike" for women to engage in matches, some Naginata instructors saw the thrill of competition as a good way to keep students interested in Naginata.

Survey of the State of Naginata in Middle Schools[24]

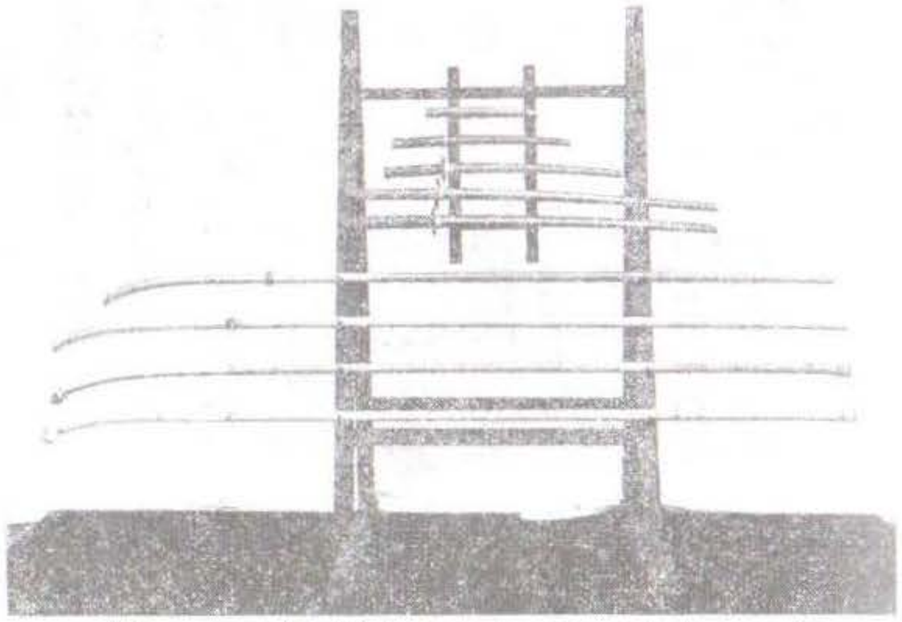
Survey Topic	Results
Schools that offer Naginata as an elective subject	127
Number of students studying Naginata as an elective subject	32,660
Schools that offer Naginata as an extra-curricular activity	149
Number of students studying Naginata as an extra-curricular activity	22,364
Instructor qualifications and numbers	Menkyo (traditional licence): 7 Hanshi: 2 Kyoshi: 10 Renshi: 13 6th *dan*: 1 5th *dan*: 2 4th *dan*: 1 3rd *dan*: 3 2nd *dan*: 1 1st *dan*: 3 1st *kyu*: 2 Other: 117
Instructor *ryuha* affiliation and numbers	Jikishinkage-ryu: 141 Tendo-ryu: 80 Kyoshin-ryu: 17 Butokukai-ryu: 6 Jozan-ryu: 2 Other: 20
Positions held within the school by the Naginata instructor in other subjects	Kyoron (Full-time teacher): 191 Jo-kyoron (Assistant teacher): 1 Shokutaku (Part-time teacher): 12 Other: 6
Teachers who only instruct Naginata	Kyoron: 11 Shokutaku: 52 Other: 12
Graduation qualifications of Naginata instructors	University: 3 Higher specialist school: 168 Middle school: 33 Elementary school: 8 Other: 35



Busen Naginata students practising Tendo-ryu kata in the Butokuden (Mitamura 1939)

For the purpose of engaging in match practise, initially a light wooden *naginata* was developed in which the blade was covered with a protective covering of leather to soften the impact. Eventually this style of *naginata* was replaced with a type on which a bamboo blade was attached to the end of a wooden shaft. These prototypes resemble the *naginata* which are used today, except nowadays the blade is attached with white plastic tape rather than twine and glue. Receiving considerable influence from Kendo rules, Naginata also developed match rules which stipulated what constituted a valid strike and foul play. The techniques and conventions used gradually moved away from those of the traditional *ryuha*. In fact, it is with this development that we start to see *naginata* vs. *naginata*. This is standard today, but in the pre-war period most matches where Naginata was featured were against Kendo practitioners.

Predictably, this move away from traditional Naginata was strongly opposed by many instructors. However, there were some who actively encouraged this development. During the war, Naginata instructors worked with the Butokukai to create *Seitei Kata* (Standard Naginata Forms).[26] Despite some opposition, a totally new set of *kata* utilising *naginata* versus *naginata* was created, a move considered to be rational and more conducive



Weapons rack with kata and softer match naginata (Mitamura 1939)

to effective teaching and propagation of Naginata *en masse*. One of the staunchest opponents to the new *kata* on the basis that it was "irrational" was Mitamura Chiyo. As a result of her open resistance to the government-backed plan, she and her husband Kunihiko retired from their positions in the Butokukai and Busen after years of dedicated service. A replacement, Yoshimura Seki, was hurriedly called in from Hiroshima.

This was just before the outbreak of the Pacific War, and *taiso* (gymnastics) was changed in name to *tairen* (physical discipline) in the same year, 1941. By 1942, the government had banned participation in most western sports, and even greater emphasis was placed on the martial arts. In March, 1942, physical education classes in schools now focused Kendo, Kyudo, Judo, Naginata (for girls), and marksmanship. The lengths the government actually went to as the war progressed can be seen clearly in a 1943 plan for martial arts instructors in schools:

1. We must induce [our students] to master our nation's unique martial arts, and train healthy, vigorous minds and bodies.
2. As well as nourishing a disposition to hone a martial spirit,

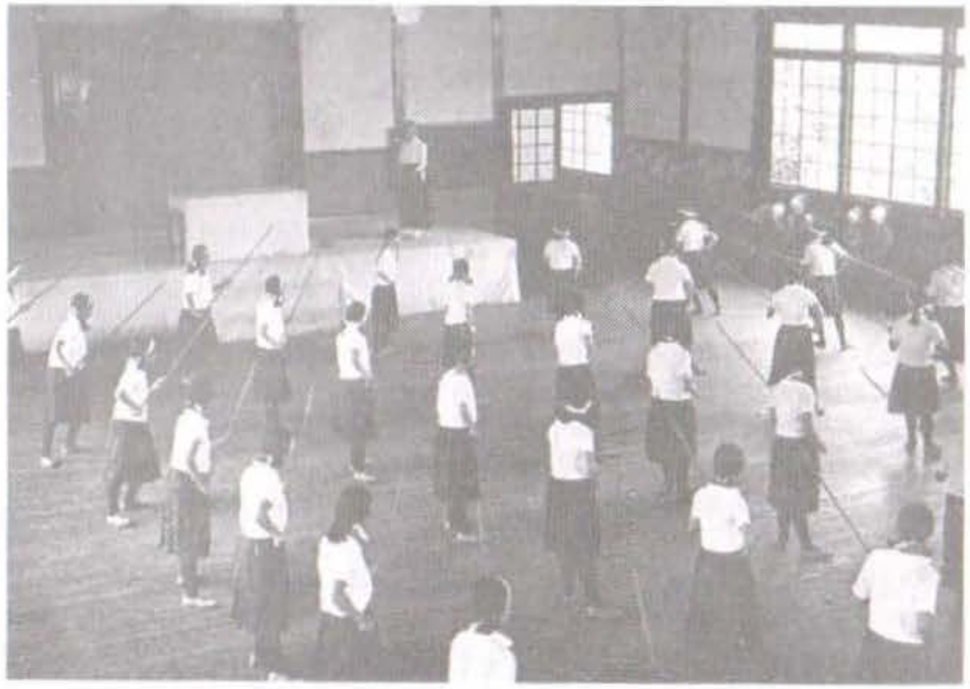
esteem propriety, and value modesty, we must encourage an aggressive spirit and a confidence in certain victory.
3. We must inculcate a spirit of self-sacrifice and train an actual fighting mentality.[27]

A significant pioneer in the development of Naginata at this time was Sakakida Yaeko. She had been a practitioner of Tendo-ryu at Busen under Mitamura Chiyo, and was renowned for her feisty competitiveness. She was also considered somewhat of a nonconformist, but was respected for her skill and dedication to the promotion of Naginata. Her biggest dissatisfaction with Naginata at the time was the difficulty in teaching large groups of students at once, and the fact that they also had to learn how to use the sword to engage in meaningful practise. She and others like her were keen to develop a unified method of Naginata training that only used the *naginata*.

There is a fascinating interview with her which outlines her life and contributions to Naginata in her own words which was published in *Kendo Nihon*, a monthly magazine on Kendo, in 1982. From here I will offer a translation of that interview in regards to the events that led to a vital step in the development of modern Naginata.[28]

> "...What I learned through taking up a teaching position for Naginata was that '*ichi, ni, san, ieiii*!' was not enough [to keep students interested]. If all you teach is *kata*, when you tell students to thrust, if they don't have anything to thrust at apart from the air it will be difficult for them to learn the principles behind the techniques. Of course, it is even more pointless if *kata* isn't practised in pairs [which was often the case in group teaching]. That meant that I had to teach how to use the sword as well. Actually, there were a number of prominent teachers who were against this, but the students loved it. It meant that they were actually able to realise the purpose of the *kata* they had been taught.
> Still, from an educational perspective I was unsatisfied. The reason why is simple. In the case of Kendo, anybody with a *shinai* (bamboo sword) is able to travel anywhere in the country and enjoy training with others. But in Naginata all we could do was '*ichi, ni, san, ieiii*!' and thrust at the air.

That is why I also taught sword techniques, but I couldn't stop wondering if there wasn't a way for *naginata* to fight against *naginata*...
...[Another problem], students would be taught Jikishinkage-ryu at elementary school and then Tendo-ryu at higher school, because Tendo-ryu was taught by the Butokukai. The students would get confused, and it was also considerably frustrating for the instructors. Faced with these problems, I



Teaching Naginata basics in a school for girls
(Sonobe Shigehachi "Gakko Naginata-do" 1936)

became even more determined to do something. I certainly had no intentions of negating the value of the old styles (*koryu*), but from my experience teaching, I clearly saw the necessity to create unified Naginata forms that were not directly linked to Jikishinkage-ryu or Tendo-ryu. Furthermore, these forms, I surmised, should be conducted with two *naginata*. The Butokukai were also thinking along the same lines. They invited instructors from Tendo-ryu and Jikishinkage-ryu to cooperate and create a new set of Butokukai Naginata Kata. However, I had different ideas for a unified form of Naginata utilising *naginata* versus

naginata, and independently continued to present them to the Ministry of Education (Mombusho). Then in 1942, I received a message from Ishii Michinori, Section Chief of the Physical Education Department in the Mombusho. He informed me he was coming to Kyoto and wanted to meet with me...

...After telling him my thoughts, I was subsequently contacted one month later, and told that I would be afforded the official title of Mombusho Physical Education Researcher, and was asked to come up with a new Naginata program for schools...

...To make this new Naginata curriculum, I went to meet teachers from many different *ryuha*. I talked at length with each of them and watched them demonstrate their techniques. What I originally envisaged was taking the strong points from each style and combining them to make a new and unique entity. The problem was that the merits of each different school were not compatible, which meant that it was an impossible task to begin with. In the end, all I could do was research the characteristics of the various schools, then consciously discard any attachment and construct something completely from scratch. In fact, I even had to forget all the Tendo-ryu techniques that I had so painstakingly learned over many years.

Anyway, I finally came up with a rough draft, which was by no means complete, and was asked to present my findings. I'll never forget it, up on the sixth floor of the Mombusho building. There were people from the Mombusho and other education related organisations, and even representatives from the armed forces present at the meeting...They were all there to listen to what I had to say. Actually, it was right about the time when the War Office was starting to get rather unforgiving, around 1943...There was a fellow named Onitsuka from the armed forces, a colonel I think. He said, 'What's the story with Naginata these days. If that's all it's about, wouldn't it be better to train in how to use a bamboo spear?' I just about burst when I heard him say that! I felt

the blood surging through my veins, and snapped back at this colonel Onitsuka 'I beg your pardon!' I heard afterwards that I even thumped the desk and had a frightful scowl on my face. 'Are you saying that we should make Naginata training and spear training the same?! I will have you know that Naginata is authorised by the Mombusho as a form of education for girls, and is not meant to be taught as a way to kill people! If it gets to the stage where Naginata has to go to war then Japan is already beyond help!'

There was a deathly silence in the room, but nothing could stop me now. Even if it was for only one hour per week, I wanted Naginata to be incorporated as an official part of the school curriculum. I wanted to teach students a wonderful form of Naginata that would last well into the future, I declared rather pompously. After making quite a scene that left everybody in stunned silence, Mr. Ogasawara said, 'Okay then, please continue with your research, and we'll leave it at that for today...'"

Sakakida did continue her research, and was assisted by greatly influential individuals in politics and the *budo* world such as the Minister of State and legendary Kendo master, Sasamori Junzo. Her efforts resulted in the official unveiling of the Mombusho Seitei Kata.

> "...After all the hard work, at last Naginata became a part of the official school curriculum for elementary girls fifth year and up to teachers' college in the *budo tairen* classes. For this purpose, the Mombusho authorised the new Seitei forms. These were the first forms which pitted *naginata* versus *naginata*.
>
> From there it was matter of teaching them throughout the country. In the midst of teaching from Kyushu at one end of the country and Tohoku at the other, and gathering all the Naginata teachers for seminars, Japan lost the war. Then there was a long period where we could train no more..."

The newly devised form of Naginata was essentially shelved, and would not see the light of day for another ten years.

8. Post-war "New Naginata"

After defeat in 1945, Japan was placed under the Occupation of the Allied forces (which was to last until the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1952). The goal of the newly founded 'Fundamental Law of Education' was created as "*the development of people healthy in spirit and body, who are filled with an independent spirit, respect the value of individuals, and who love truth and justice.*" The 'School Education Law' of 1947 was then promulgated, and a new school system was established. The Butokukai was dissolved immediately after the war, and *budo*, because of its links with a militaristic past, was given no place at all in the new system.

> "On the basis of such facts as these, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, recommended in a memorandum to the Chief of Staff that: "Dissolution of Dai Nippon Butokukai by order to the Imperial Japanese Government is recommended in accordance with the provisions of SCAPIN 548, paragraph 1 f, on the grounds that this is an organization 'affording military or quasi-military training' and which provides for the 'perpetuation of militarism or a martial spirit in Japan.'" Paragraph 1 f of SCAPIN 548 states: "You will prohibit the formation of any political party, association, society, or other organization and any activity on the part of any of them or of any individual or group whose purpose, or the effect of whose activity is affording military or quasi-military training." Pursuant to this memorandum, the Japanese Government was orally instructed to add the Dai Nippon Butokukai to the list of organizations in appendix A of SCAPIN 548 and to dissolve the organization together with all its branches and any organizations which it controlled or with which it was affiliated. It is interesting to note that in 1943 the Attorney General's Office of the United States Government listed the branches of the Butokukai existing in America among a group of subversive organizations which also included that notorious arm of politics by terrorism, the Kokuryu Kai or Black Dragon Society."[29]

However, following a gradual lift on the Occupation-imposed ban on *budo*, Naginata was eventually reinstated in schools in the

1950s, albeit as a modern 'sport' in a form conducive to promoting the "new democratic values" emphasised in the revised post-war school system. In 1954, following the lead of Kendo, a research committee of eight people was formed—regardless of *ryuha* affiliation—with the intention of investigating potential forms of Naginata for reintroduction into schools. The core members of this committee to establish so-called *Gakko-Naginata* (School Naginata) were Konishi Shizuko, Shirai Kanji, Sakakida Yaeko, Sonobe Hidehachi, Tokunaga Chiyoko (all holding the title of Naginata Kyoshi at the time), Tsuyama Katsuko, Jinbo Masako, and Yagida Tsuruko (all regional education supervisors).

In addition, to these committee members, there were also advisors from local boards of education: Nakakaichi Katsuhisa (Kyoto), Iwano Jiro (Osaka), Hori Kohei (Hyogo), and Inoue Masataka (Osaka). Also, Ministry of Education Physical Education Section Chief Nishida, Nippon Sport Science University President Kurimoto Yoshihiko, and Osaka Physical Education Chief Hamada attended meetings to discuss the significance of "School Naginata".

While this was happening, there were also moves to establish the All Japan Naginata Federation. A committee was formed and was based at Konishi Shin'ueimon's Shubukan Dojo in Itami city, Hyogo prefecture.

Former marchioness Yamanouchi Teiko became the first Chairwoman of the All Japan Naginata Federation inaugurated on May 4, 1955, at the Butokuden in Kyoto. In 1960, Yamanouchi took voluntary retirement and Vice Chairwoman Konishi Shizuko took her place. This came just after Naginata's acceptance by the Mombusho. The result of nineteen meetings by the research committee was a form of Naginata in which a clear distinction was made from *ryuha*-style Naginata. They created a new sport version of Naginata with an entirely new system of techniques and training methodology which could be employed in the school curriculum for girls.[30]

In 1959 the proposal was accepted by the Mombusho, and they authorised the introduction of Naginata into schools that wished to offer it as an extra-curricular club activity for junior high school girls and above. Here, traditional *ryuha* affiliations were

transcended with a hybrid sport version of Naginata initially called *Gakko Naginata* (school Naginata) but later changed to *Atarashii Naginata* (New Naginata) in a concerted break away from any militaristic era connotations. Actually, the wartime innovations of Sakakida Yaeko and her colleagues were changed slightly and re-instated, and propagated thereafter.

Officials from the Mombusho and the AJNF when Naginata was admitted into the education system in 1959

To quote Sakakida again:

> "It was in May of 1953 when they held the first Kyoto Taikai for Kendo. After that tournament, Sonobe Hideo, Mitamura Chiyo, Nishigaki Kin, Sonobe Hidehachi, Tokunaga Chiyoko and some other Naginata instructors had a meeting in the sub-*dojo* of the now defunct Busen. We discussed forming a federation and spreading Naginata again. We also discussed the necessity of creating new Naginata forms for teaching in schools. In regards to formulating new *kata* somebody said, 'hey Sakakida, what about those Seitei Kata you made for the Mombusho? Could you use those as a base and come up with something?'

To be honest, I was hesitant to take on the responsibility. I was subjected to all sorts of insults and slander when trying to disseminate the forms during the war, and really didn't want to go through that again. Then Sonobe Hideo tapped me on the shoulder. 'The cold hard truth is we (our generation) died in the war. You've got the experience, so please say nothing and just take the job.' I decided to take her advice.

Using the Mombusho Seitai Kata as a base, I asked the opinions of numerous teachers, and eventually came up with what is now known as *Atarashii Naginata*...It was a revolutionary development. The forms were not referred to as *kata* but were named Shikake-Oji, and consisted of eight predetermined patterns which utilised an array of techniques. Even the equipment was modified, and the *naginata* blade became constructed from two slats of bamboo, which meant that Naginata practitioners, just like those of Kendo, could freely go anywhere in the country and compete or train with others. This was 'New Naginata'..."

Her book, *Atarashii Naginata: Shido no tebiki* (New Naginata: Instructional handbook), co-authored with Tsuyama Katsuko, became the standard textbook for many years.[31]

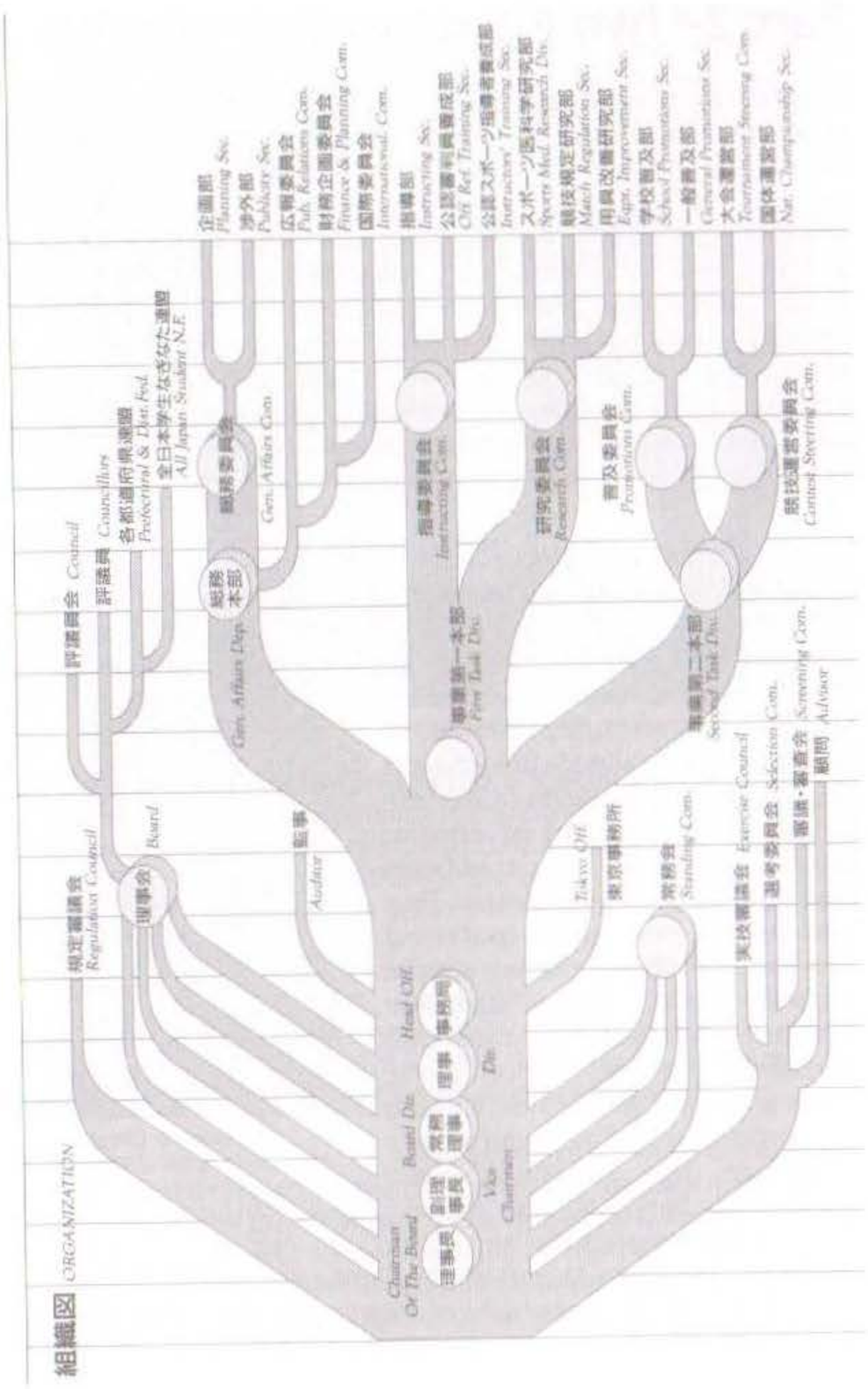
The Mombusho advised the new All Japan Naginata Federation that they should promote 'Naginata' using the phonetic *hiragana* characters rather than Chinese characters (*kanji*). The reasoning for this was to rid the newly developed version of Naginata of any militaristic connotations or nuances that maybe attached to the *kanji*, as opposed to the neutral *hiragana*. Thus, the characters "なぎなた" are used to write Naginata for the post-war sporting innovation, although *kanji* are still used in regards to the Naginata of traditional styles such as Tendo-ryu and Jikishinkage-ryu and so on. Also, the Ministry of Education directed the Naginata Federation not to add '*do*' (Way) after Naginata (Naginata-*do*). This directive was intended to further separate new Naginata from that practised before and during the war, and its spiritual hence nationalistic connotations.

In April 1968, the All Japan Naginata Federation became a foundation. In 1970, the Mombusho revised its policies pertaining to the teaching of *budo* in schools, and issued a directive stating that *"Kyudo, wrestling, and Naginata were permissible to be taught in physical education classes at high school level."* Consequently, Naginata started to flourish in schools and in the community (although never to the extent of Kendo or Judo), which prompted the AJNF to develop another set of *kata* and also official guidelines regarding the concept and instruction of Naginata. (See Chapter 2).

Nowadays, most Naginata practitioners train primarily in Atarashii Naginata, although there are a number who train in both the new form and a traditional style as well. Currently, Naginata is reportedly practised by over 40,000 people in Japan. Even now, the vast majority of participants are women, although there has been a marked increase in the number of men studying Naginata in recent years. This resulted in the commencement of the annual All Japan Men's Naginata Championships from 2002. World Championships are also held every four years, and the International Naginata Federation now has over ten fully affiliated countries. More countries are in the process of becoming affiliated, and Naginata continues to grow in numbers and popularity, slowly but surely.

In summary, the following dates and events show the post-war development of Atarashii Naginata and the overseeing body:

Year	Event
1945	Practice of *budo* was forbidden following Japan's WWII defeat
1953	Practice of *budo* was once again permitted
1955	Inauguration of the All Japan Naginata Federation
1956	1st All Japan Naginata Championship Tournament
1962	1st All Japan Student Naginata Championship Tournament
1968	The AJNF was recognised as a non-profit organisation
1970	Permission granted to teach Naginata in physical education classes at high school level.
1971	1st National Engi Tournament
1977	Creation of the All Japan Naginata Federation Kata
1978	AJNF became affiliated with the Japan Amateur Sports Association
1981	Establishment of *The Concept of Naginata* & *The Principles of Instructing*
1982	First appearance in the National Sports Meet held in Shimane
1983	Accepted as an official event at the National Sports Meet held in Gunma (Kokutai)
1988	Formation of the All Japan Student Naginata Federation
1990	Inauguration of the International Naginata Federation (INF)
1992	Affiliation to the All Japan High School Athletic Federation
1993	1st All Japan Junior High Naginata Championship Tournament
1995	1st Naginata World Championships
2002	1st All Japan Men's Naginata Championships



Part 2- Two Pioneers[32]

There are many individuals who greatly influenced the development of *naginata-jutsu* into the modern *budo* art practiced widely today, both in the pre-war and post-war periods. However, in the next section I will introduce only two well-known masters, Mitamura Chiyo and Sonobe Hideo. I chose these two particular women as they represent the two core traditional lines of Naginata of which the All Japan Naginata Federation is made up today, the Tendo-ryu, and the Jikishinkage-ryu. Of course there are other important *koryu* affiliations in the AJNF such as Toda-ha Buko-ryu, but numerically speaking these two *ryuha* are by far the most significant. Firstly, I will introduce Mitamura Chiyo.

1- Mitamura Chiyo (1885-1966)

Fifteenth Headmaster of Tendo-ryu Naginata-jutsu

Mitamura Chiyo

In May of 1885 a group of ninety-four volunteers in Kameoka, in present-day Kyoto prefecture, formed an association they called Seitokusha as a measure against the flood of Western culture which they saw as bringing about the demise of traditional Japanese culture and ideals. They promoted all manner of traditional arts and activities including special imperial study groups, Japanese literature appreciation meetings, martial arts training, tea ceremony, flower arranging, and even sericulture (silk production). The *bujutsu* arts taught at the Seitokusha were *kyujutsu* (archery), *bajutsu* (horse riding), *kenjutsu*, *naginata-jutsu*, *kusarigama* (sickle and chain), *sojutsu* (spear), *jujutsu*, and so on. Mitamura Akinori of the Tamba Kameoka domain was charged with the responsibility of instructing *naginata-jutsu* and the *kusarigama*.

Akinori was born December 4, 1847. Since the age of ten he had studied Tendo-ryu Heiho under Shimogawara Soke, the twelfth Headmaster and chief *bujutsu* instructor for the domain. The curriculum included *kenjutsu*, *naginata-jutsu*, and the *kusarigama*. Apart from this, he also studied *kyujutsu*, *bajutsu*, *sojutsu*, *hojutsu* (firearms), and was a highly regarded student in all of them.

Some Seitokusha members

In 1889, the Seitokusha constructed a special martial arts *dojo* called the Enshukan. The opening of the Enshukan was quite a lively affair with a host of matches conducted by leading swordsmen of the day. Until the construction of the *dojo*, all the classes were conducted in the respective instructors' houses. Akinori's classes were no exception. He laid straw mats down on the earthen floor and trained himself and his students with unbridled enthusiasm. In fact, many of the locals joked somewhat mockingly that he trained so much he didn't have time to sit down and eat, which was probably just as well since there was little food available for the widely unemployed families of de-classed *bushi* stock.

The Kameoka domain was by no means wealthy. When the domains were dissolved throughout the country during the Meiji Restoration, many of those of *bushi* lineage were left to fend for themselves. Some *bushi* were able to make a living by turning to farming, and sometimes it was possible to see such fellows suffering the severe degradation of pulling ploughs in place of horses or oxen.

Even after the Kameoka domain was disbanded, Akinori continued training in *bujutsu* in earnest despite being stricken with poverty, much to the amazement of the locals. Still, as the *dojo* was only officially supposed to operate from 6:00pm in order to encourage people to continue working, Akinori also busied himself during the day with various activities to keep his family in food. He studied the "art of photography" and even opened a studio. However, he soon found that most Japanese at the time had quite an aversion to photos, as they believed it drained them of their souls. He had to satisfy himself taking photos of Kameoka castle and his family before being forced to close his business.

Mitamura Akinori

Despite his business failings, he still continued to train and teach at the Enshukan. In 1890 he was invited by Prince Yamashina-no-Miya to give a demonstration of Tendo-ryu *naginata-jutsu* at the Kanshuji temple in Kyoto. The following year he received the Tendo-ryu Heiho Menkyo-Kaiden making him the new official headmaster of the tradition.

It was about this time that a young girl of seven joined the *dojo*. Her name was Naito Chiyo. Chiyo was born April 18, 1885, into an ex-*bushi* family, and was actually the young daughter of Akinori's sister-in-law. Ever since she was a toddler she enjoyed watching *bujutsu* training, and would spend hours on end at the Enshukan observing the lessons. As soon as she started taking formal lessons herself it was apparent that she was a gifted student, and Akinori held high hopes for her.

In due course, Tendo-ryu *naginata-jutsu* amassed quite a following, and Akinori was often called upon to instruct in the art and to give demonstrations. On one occasion in 1894, Chiyo accompanied him at a demonstration in front of members of the imperial family to high acclaim. It was probably about this time that Akinori decided that he would train Chiyo to become heir to the tradition, and in 1895 he officially adopted her into his line of the family. That

same year, the Dai Nihon Butokukai was formed in Kyoto. On December 25, a *bujutsu* festival (the 1st Butokusai) was conducted at the newly constructed Heian Shrine followed immediately by another large commemorative demonstration event for the martial arts held over three days at the Expo Hall in Kyoto. Chiyo also demonstrated there with her mentor Akinori. They were held in such high regard that they were asked back to demonstrate each year after that.

In October, 1898, the Meiji Emperor requested to see *bujutsu* matches. On October 24, a venue was prepared at the Sanjusangendo temple in Kyoto, and a series of matches was conducted for his benefit. According to records, in attendance at this particular gathering were fourteen *kyujutsu*, ten *jujutsu*, twenty-eight *kenjutsu* and three *naginata-jutsu* practitioners—Akinori, Chiyo, and Nagasawa Kiyo. Wherever they went, Chiyo would be Akinori's demonstration partner.

Probably the first time Chiyo ever participated in an *ishu-jiai* (match between *kenjutsu* and *naginata-jutsu*) was in May, 1902, at the 7th Butokusai. She was eighteen at the time, and ended up losing the match to a well-known fencer from Toyama. Nevertheless, onlookers were so impressed by her showing that officials in the Butokukai decided to award her a special certificate of commendation and a commemorative *tanto* (dagger).

In 1905, the Seitokusha became the official Kameoka branch of the Butokukai. The following year, the Butokukai created a Naginata section, and Mitamura Akinori was appointed professor in charge. He moved his whole family into Kyoto city to be closer to the Butokukai headquarters. Five students including Chiyo were inducted into the Butokukai's school as full-time students.

From 1906, Chiyo began assisting Akinori with teaching at the school. She had gained quite a reputation in *bujutsu* circles for her refined technique. Also afforded considerable fame with the *naginata* was her contemporary Sonobe Hideo. Sonobe Hideo had honed her skills in the famous *gekiken kogyo* martial arts demonstration matches that were held around the country at various venues to entertain the public. In many ways, Chiyo and

Hideo were very different in the way they approached Naginata. Hideo was sharp and fiery and to an extent self-taught, whereas Chiyo had been put through a rigorous regime of formal training, and her movements were calm and deliberate.

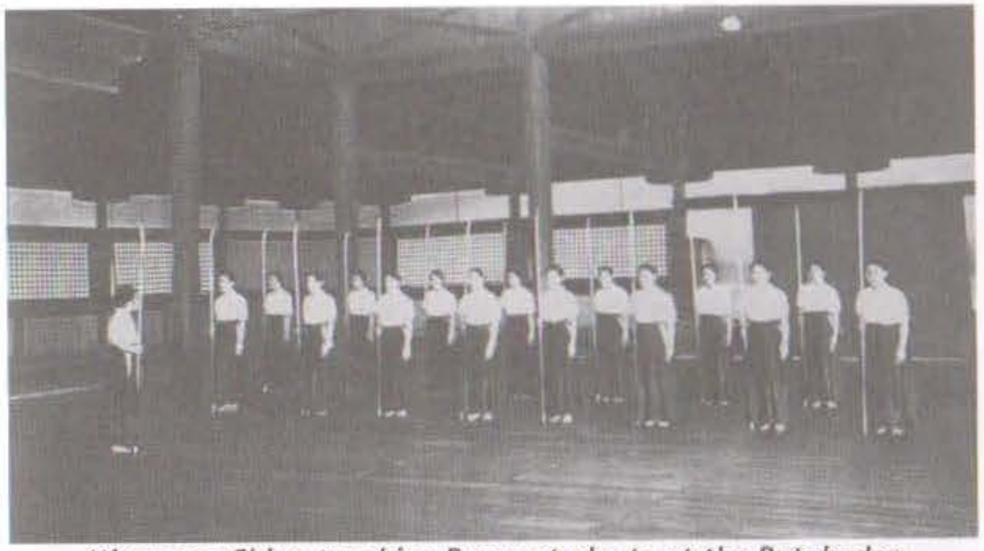
After a training session or a match, people would comment on how clean the soles of her feet were. They would ask her how she could keep them so clean to which she would reply, "My feet are always elevated about one sheet of paper off the floor..."

Mitamura Akinori died at age 83 on January 1, 1931, after spending a lifetime promoting Tendo-ryu. Chiyo succeeded him as the head of the tradition becoming the Fifteenth Soke.

Mitamura Kunihiko

As outlined above, Naginata was in an age of ever-increasing popularity as its value had been recognised for teaching girls physical education in schools. It was eventually introduced as a compulsory subject in the education system along with Kendo and Judo. This sparked off a need for teachers trained in the art. The Butokukai created a teachers' training program for Naginata on June 8, 1934, and Chiyo was appointed professor in charge of the course. She selected some of the techniques from the extensive Tendo-ryu curriculum and created a syllabus for training new instructors to go forth and propagate the art. At this time she was married to Kunihiko, also a student of Akinori and a well known *kenjutsu* expert, and together they busied themselves propagating Naginata.

In March, 1941, the Butokukai decided to develop a special set of Naginata Kata for teaching Naginata basics in schools, but Chiyo objected strongly. Instead she formed a school called the



Mitamura Chiyo teaching Busen students at the Butokuden (Mitamura 1939)

Busen Naginata students and teachers

Mitamura Chiyo (right) demonstrating Tendo-ryu with Nishigaki Kin

Tendojuku, specialising in teaching Tendo-ryu to trainee teachers, which she kept going until the end of the war. As outlined above, after the war the Butokukai was dissolved by GHQ and martial arts were prohibited for a number of years. It wasn't until 1955 that Naginata was revived with the formation of the All Japan Naginata Federation. The federation set about creating a number of new techniques and practice routines for the propagation of the art in schools once again. Mitamura Chiyo served in the federation as Chief Advisor until her death in 1966, aged 81. Her influence in the development of modern Naginata is immeasurable, and many of Japan's top Naginata masters are direct students of her and her husband Kunihiko from the days of the Budo Senmon Gakko (Busen- the Martial arts school administered by the Butokukai). Her daughter, Mitamura Takeko, is the current Soke of the Tendo-ryu tradition.

Mitamura Chiyo

2- Sonobe Hideo (1870-1963)

Fifteenth Soke of Jikishinkage-ryu Naginata-do

On March 18, 1870, a baby girl was born into the family of Kusaka Yosaburo. Yosaburo "the horse-minder" was the third son of Matsumae Tetsunosuke, a retainer of Date Sodo of the Sendai domain. Yosaburo was adopted into the Kusaka family through marriage to Kiji. By the time the last of his progeny was born, they already had two boys and five girls. Hence, she was named Tarita (Enough) by her grandmother Oyoshi. Another daughter of Kiji and Yosaburo was named Aya (Mistake).

Sonobe Hideo

The year after Tarita was born, traditional *han* or domains governed by *daimyo* lords were disbanded and replaced by the prefectural system. The Kusakas moved to a small village called Kaminome in Miyagi prefecture and turned their hand to agriculture to make a living. This was the location where the famed Sengoku warlord Date Masamune used to have his castle.

Despite his loss of status due to the great social and political reforms of the time, Yosaburo found it difficult to look at horses as farming animals. To him, horses were as noble as the *bushi* they were trained to carry into battle. Thus, even though he was now 'relegated' to farming the land, the horses he kept in his stable were for riding, not pulling ploughs. Like her father, Tarita, at the tender age of seven or eight also had a passion for horses, and was often seen galloping bareback through the village. There were no bounds to her tenaciousness, and it seemed even then she was destined to excel at some less than 'ladylike' vocation.

When Tarita was sixteen, she was to have a fortuitous meeting with Satake Kanryusai. Kanryusai, an ex-*bushi* from Echizen, was also a student of Sakakibara Kenkichi of the Jikishinkage-ryu martial tradition. As we have seen, Sakakibara Kenkichi had become famous throughout the land for his efforts to popularise the traditional martial arts which had fallen into general disfavour in the now rapidly modernising nation. He did this by organising troupes of martial artists to compete in matches in front of paying spectators (*gekiken kogyo*). Kanryusai was an early participant in these tournaments, and later formed his own troupe of deposed *bushi* martial artists. He and his wife, Shigeo, a skilled exponent in *kenjutsu* and *naginata-jutsu*, brought their troupe to the neighbouring town of Furukawa. The sound of the conch and the beating of the drums signalling the arrival of the troupe excited the locals and would-be challengers.

Tarita had heard about the *gekiken kogyo* and was determined to go and see the demonstration matches. She walked over the mountain paths into Furukawa to witness a sight that stirred her like nothing else had before. Upon returning home, she asked her father if he would permit her to join the troupe and learn the martial arts. Of course he said no, so she crept out of the house in the middle of the night and made the journey back to Furukawa to where Kanryusai was staying. Her older sister Oyoki followed her and took her back home, but not before Kanryusai promised he would accept her as a student so long as she had a letter of permission from her father.

It was Oyoki who finally managed to persuade Yosaburo on Tarita's behalf. "Women should also be allowed to make a name for themselves through the martial arts. At least it's a living."

When Yosaburo finally conceded, grandmother Oyoshi removed her *naginata* from its resting place on the wall and gave it to her as a farewell present. Kusaka Tarita entered the tutelage of Satake Kanryusai on April 7, 1886. She was destined to become known as Sonobe Hideo, the fifteenth Soke of Jikishinkage-ryu *naginata-jutsu*.

Sonobe Hideo on the right
(Sonobe Hideo & Shigehachi "Gakko Naginata-do" 1936)

Kanryusai was a stern man, and he was about to put the young Tarita through her paces. He told her "training is going to be damned tough. My wife Shigeo and I are going to take you to hell and back, but we will make sure you become a fine martial artist. Don't falter!" Her Naginata training commenced from that day, but the *gekiken* procession had to keep moving to survive.
In Kanryusai's troupe there were approximately forty members who travelled from one locality to the next to entertain the masses and make some money out of the thing they knew best, just in order to ensure their next meal. There were a number of married couples with children, and there were also single swordsmen trying to make a living. Tarita was kept busy with chores not only for her new mentors, but also cooking, cleaning, and seeing to the needs of all the other members. Whenever she had a break, the Satakes would teach her *kata* from Jikishinkage-ryu.

Not much is known about Shigeo except she had studied Jikishinkage-ryu from age six under the auspices of Kurihara Bo in Edo. Although she was a ferocious fighter out on the mound, she treated Tarita with great compassion. Tarita would responded by

getting up early in the morning and practise cutting five hundred times, followed by another five-hundred before she went to sleep in the evening. She did this in secret, and her mentors were none the wiser to her tenacity.

Hideo demonstrating with Shigehachi

In October 1888, Satake Kanryusai's troupe set up house in Kajikazawa after performing in Kofu (Yamanashi prefecture). Two and a half years had passed since Tarita joined the Satake troupe and started her training. She had competed in some of the matches, but only as an extension of her training. Shigeo taught Tarita many things about the spirit of the martial arts. "Tarita, the *naginata* is not just a stick that you swing around with your hands. You have to move it with your '*ki*'. Try and imagine that you are cutting an enemy on the opposite riverbank. You must learn the importance of *ki*." On the other hand, the only advice that Kanryusai ever offered was "learning *bujutsu* is learning how to die." Apart from that gem of wisdom, he seemed almost indifferent to her training. This was of some cause for concern to Tarita.

Determined to succeed in her training, she decided to go and pray at one of the temples in the region. After the day's matches had been concluded, she asked Shigeo if she could go to a famous Nichiren sect temple in the mountains overlooking Kajikazawa. She arrived at the Kuonji temple well into the early hours. She entered the temple gates and ascended the steep stone steps. After reaching the top of the stairs, she walked past the great temple halls and noticed a giant cedar tree.

Letting loose with a shrill *kiai* she proceeded to pound the old cedar with her *naginata*. Before long she had become so frenzied in her attack on the tree that she had no sense of where she was or what she was doing. She continued on and on, screaming and cutting, with absolutely no sense of the time that was passing. When she had finally exhausted all of her reserves of energy and taught that old cedar a jolly good lesson, she fixed her *kamae* (stance), and demonstrated *zanshin* (continued physical and mental alertness) to finish in good stead.

Suddenly, a voice thundered down from the belfry. "Well done lass!" It was Satake Kanryusai. He had followed her up to the temple, and remained hidden as he watched her furious training session. "I hereby licence you in Jikishinkage-ryu *naginata-jutsu*. From this day forth, you shall be known as Hideo."

Satake Kanryusai's troupe continued to travel the country conducting matches for the enjoyment of the general public. Kusaka Hideo fought swordsmen from all the provinces they ventured into, and maintained an exemplary record without loss. However, with the establishment of the Dai Nihon Butokukai in Kyoto in April 1895, many of the nation's martial artists were united under one umbrella. It was around this time that Satake Kanryusai and Shigeo officially designated Hideo as the fifteenth Soke of the tradition on May 29, 1896.

The last time that Kusaka Hideo participated in a *gekiken* demonstration match was in January, 1897. Not long afterwards, she married Sonobe Masanori, a *dojo* owner in Kobe and exponent of Chokuyushin-ryu. Together they managed the *dojo* and continued to propagate *budo*. Hideo also made many appearances in tournaments and demonstrations sponsored by the Dai Nihon

Sonobe Shigehachi- Hideo's successor as Soke of Jikishinkage-ryu

Butokukai, and had numerous memorable matches against well-known swordsmen.

Probably the most famous of these was against Watanabe Noboru in May 1899. Watanabe, an exponent of Shinto Munen-ryu, was a high ranking official in the Meiji government as well as being a celebrated swordsman. However, Hideo was far from perturbed by his fame, and set about systematically dismantling Watanabe. The hiding he was receiving at the end of Hideo's *naginata* was so resounding that he was forced to concede before the match reached its inevitable conclusion.

In May 1918, she moved to Tokyo to take up teaching positions in a number of girls' schools culminating in the formation of *Naginata Dojo Shutokukan Naginata Kyoin Yoseijo* (Shutokukan Naginata Teachers Training College) where she concentrated her efforts on nurturing instructors. Apart from one defeat at the hands of Hotta Shajiro, a student of Watanabe Noboru, she won every other match in her long career. She died September 29, 1963, aged 93.

Endnotes

[1] Chronicle of the reigns of the imperial court; also called *Shikanki* and *Geki-nikki*-compiled 934-1153. The first reference to the *naginata* was made in the 1146th entry.

[2] Futaki Ken'ichi, Irie Kohei, Kato Hiroshi (eds.), *Budo*, Tokyodo Shuppan, 1994. See the article "Naginata" by Inoue Aya, pp. 202-3.

[3] Ellis Amdur, "The Development and History of the Naginata", *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* vol 4. no. 1, 1995. Via Media Publishing Co. pp.33-49.

[4] Roald M. Knutsen, *Japanese Polearms*, London: Holland Press, 1963. p. 32.

[5] I referred to *The Tale of the Heike* by Helen Craig McCullough (trans.), Stanford University Press, 1988.

[6] I confirmed that the original term used was "*naginata*" by referring to the text reproduced in *Heike monogatari*, annotated by Kajihara Masaaki and Yamashita Hiroaki. Iwanami Shoten, 1991-1993. pp. 239-241.

[7] McCullough. Op. Cit. p. 153.

[8] See, for example, I. Bottomly and A.P. Hopson, *Arms and Armour of the Bushi: The History of Weaponry in Ancient Japan* p. 49; Gregory Irvine, *The Japanese Sword: the Soul of the Bushi*, pp. 36-38; Clive Sinclaire, *Bushi: The Weapons & Spirit of the Japanese Warrior*, p. 45.

[9] Thomas Conlan, "State of War: The Violent Order of Fourteenth Century Japan", p. 65; Suzuki Masaya, *Katana to kubi-tori: Sengoku kassen isetsu*, pp. 78-80.

[10] See Karl Friday's enlightening paper "Off the Warpath: Military Science & Budo in the Evolution of *Ryuha Bugei*" in Bennett (ed.), *Budo Perspectives*, Auckland: KW Publications pp. 249-265.

[11] Ellis Amdur, "Women Warriors of Japan", http://www.koryu.com/library/wwj1.html

[12] Yamaga Soko, "Tetsuwa" in Hirose Yutaka (ed), *Yamaga Soko zenshu shiso-hen vol. 11*, Iwanami Shoten, 1940.

[13] For a detailed analysis of the history of the development of *bogu* in English, see Nakamura Tamio's "The History of *Bogu*", (translated by Alex Bennett) in *Kendo World* Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 3-12.

[14] Nakamura Tamio, "*Kindai naginata shoshi*" in *Kindai Naginata meicho senshuu* vol. 8. Hon no Tomosha, 2004. p.7.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] The *Haitorei* of March, 1876.

[17] (Seinan Senso). This was the last major armed uprising against the new Meiji government and its reforms, and was carried out by former samurai of the Satsuma *han* (now Kagoshima prefecture) under the leadership of Saigo Takamori. The rebellion lasted from 29 January to 24 September 1877, and its eventual suppression proved the effectiveness of the government's new conscript army in modern warfare against traditional samurai methods.

[18] No major study of the *gekiken kogyo* has been made in English. For further information regarding this important episode in *budo* history, refer to Ishigaki Yasuzo's *Gekkenkai shimatsu*, Shimazu Shobo, 2000.

[19] Nakamura Tamio, *Kendo jiten*, Shimazu Shobo, 1994. p.176.

[20] Nakamura Tamio, "*Kindai naginata shoshi*", p 12.

[21] In 1919 Nishikubo Hiromichi, the newly appointed principal of the Butokukai's specialist school (Busen) changed the prefix '*jutsu*' to '*do*' thus making '*bujutsu*' into '*budo*'. Henceforth, *kenjutsu* became *kendo*, *kyujutsu* became *kyudo* and so on, to stress the character building attributes of the martial arts as opposed to the combative or competitive aspects.

[22] *Zenkoku Shihan Gakko-cho Kaigi-yoko*, Monbusho Futsu Gakumukyoku, 1911.

[23] Inoue Aya, Op. Cit. pp 202-3.
[24] Taken from the report "*Zenkoku chuto-gakko ni okeru kyudo naginata ni kansuru chosa*", Monbudaijin Kanbo Taiiku-ka, 1937.
[25] Nakamura Tamio, "*Kindai naginata shoshi*", p. 17.
[26] In March 1942, the Butokukai was transformed into a government controlled national federation of all the budo arts in an attempt to help the war effort. There were five sections for Kendo, Judo, Kyudo, Jukendo (bayonet), marksmanship, but not one for Naginata. Naginata was included under the auspices of Kendo.
[27] Translation quoted from G. C. Hurst's *Armed Martial Arts of Japan*, p.165. (Originally from S. Nakabayashi's *Kendo-shi*, p. 106).
[28] The following excerpts are from an interview with Sakakida Yaeko published in the *Kendo Nihon Monthly*, June and July, 1982.
[29] *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*; Report. Contributors: Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Government Section—Publisher: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, Washington, DC. 1949).
[30] See *Nihon no Budo (Kyudo/Naginata)*, Kodansha, 1983. pp. 261-63.
[31] Sakakida Yaeko, Tsuyama Katsuko, *Atarashii Naginata: Shido no tebiki*, Taiiku no Kagakusha, 1960.
[32] Some of the following information was verified through casual conversations with Mitamura Takeko, current Soke of the Tendo-ryu and Sonobe Masami current Soke of the Jikishinkage-ryu, and also from the book *Ken no Tatsujin*, Shin Jinbutsu Oraisha, 2002.

Chapter 2:

Form and Theory

Benkei on Gojo bridge

Part 1 - Naginata Concepts

1. Why Naginata?

Naginata kata from the Katori Shinto-ryu

Why practise Naginata now? What benefits can be gained through training in a martial art which has no obvious self-defence applications? What is the point? These are valid questions for many practitioners of Japanese *budo* arts. The benefits of training in any physical activity are obvious, but in the case of *budo*, reference is often made to the character-building potential. The educational characteristics of *budo* are widely accepted in Japan (if not unquestioned), but many people seem to not understand that just training in *budo* is not enough for it to be an effective means of spiritual growth. The practitioner does not become a 'good' person by virtue of just turning up at the *dojo* for training. A conscious effort needs to be made to try and understand the many, often nebulous principles that provide the philosophical basis for *budo*.

When trying to ascertain these principles as they pertain to Naginata, a good place to start is by looking at the official *Budo Charter*. As I was on the English translation revision committee convened by the Nippon Budokan in 2004, I took the liberty of including it in full in this section. This will provide a starting point for the practitioner to reassess what *budo* ideals are supposed to be. This Charter is endorsed by the All Japan Naginata Federation.

昭和六十二年四月二十三日制定

武道憲章

平成十六年九月十六日改訂

武道憲章英文

平成十六年九月十六日制定

こども武道憲章

日本武道協議会

The Budō Charter
(Budō Kenshō)

Budō, the Japanese martial ways, have their origins in the age-old martial spirit of Japan. Through centuries of historical and social change, these forms of traditional culture evolved from combat techniques (*jutsu*) into ways of self-development (*dō*).

Seeking the perfect unity of mind and technique, *budō* has been refined and cultivated into ways of physical training and spiritual development. The study of *budō* encourages courteous behaviour, advances technical proficiency, strengthens the body, and perfects the mind. Modern Japanese have inherited traditional values through *budō* which continue to play a significant role in the formation of the Japanese personality, serving as sources of boundless energy and rejuvenation. As such, *budō* has attracted strong interest internationally, and is studied around the world.

However, a recent trend towards infatuation just with technical ability compounded by an excessive concern with winning is a severe threat to the essence of *budō*. To prevent any possible misrepresentation, practitioners of *budō* must continually engage in self-examination and endeavour to perfect and preserve this traditional culture.

It is with this hope that we, the member organisations of the Japanese Budō Association, established *The Budō Charter* in order to uphold the fundamental principles of *budō*.

ARTICLE 1: OBJECTIVE OF BUDŌ
Through physical and mental training in the Japanese martial ways, *budō* exponents seek to build their character, enhance their sense of judgement, and become disciplined individuals capable of making contributions to society at large.

ARTICLE 2: KEIKO (Training)
When training in *budō*, practitioners must always act with respect and courtesy, adhere to the prescribed fundamentals of the art, and resist the temptation to pursue mere technical skill rather than strive towards the perfect unity of mind, body, and technique.

ARTICLE 3: SHIAI (Competition)
Whether competing in a match or doing set forms (*Kata*), exponents must externalise the spirit underlying *budō*. They must do their best at all times, winning with modesty, accepting defeat gracefully, and constantly exhibiting self-control.

ARTICLE 4: DŌJŌ (Training Hall)
The *dōjō* is a special place for training the mind and body. In the *dōjō*, *budō* practitioners must maintain discipline, and show proper courtesies and respect. The *dōjō* should be a quiet, clean, safe, and solemn environment.

ARTICLE 5: TEACHING
Teachers of *budō* should always encourage others to also strive to better themselves and diligently train their minds and bodies, while continuing to further their understanding of the technical principles of *budō*. Teachers should not allow focus to be put on winning or losing in competition, or on technical ability alone. Above all, teachers have a responsibility to set an example as role models.

ARTICLE 6: PROMOTING BUDŌ
Persons promoting *budō* must maintain an open-minded and international perspective as they uphold traditional values. They should make efforts to contribute to research and teaching, and do their utmost to advance *budō* in every way.

Member Organisations of the Japanese Budo Association: All Japan Judo Federation; All Japan Kendo Federation; All Nippon Kyudo Federation; Japan Sumo Federation; Japan Karatedo Federation; Aikikai Foundation; Shorinji Kempo Federation; All Japan Naginata Federation; All Japan Jukendo Federation; Nippon Budokan Foundation

Established on 23 April, 1987 by the Japanese Budō Association (Nippon Budō Kyōgikai). English translation revised 16 September, 2004.

The All Japan Naginata Federation created an official concept for Naginata a decade before the Budo Charter, in 1977. (The following is the author's unofficial translation).

The Concept of Naginata

The concept of Naginata is, to foster people with balanced bodies and minds through training.

The Principles of Instructing

Through correct Naginata instruction,
Practitioners will be encouraged to develop their technical skills,
Cultivate their minds,
Enhance their vitality,
Nurture their strength,
Preserve traditional Japanese culture embodied within the art of Naginata,
Maintain discipline,
Show courtesy and respect to others,
Always act in good faith,
And strive to become useful member of society promoting peace and prosperity among all peoples.

Much is made of Naginata as a "Way" of lifetime development. However, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, although "*do*" was attached as a suffix to Naginata before and during WWII to emphasise the spiritual/traditional aspects, this was removed by a Mombusho directive when Naginata was resurrected in the post-war period. Most of the other *budo* arts retain this suffix (Kendo, Judo, Karatedo etc.), but in Naginata this concept is inferred. According to Oya Minoru, the etymology of the character for "*do*" or "*michi*" is as follows:

> "The character "*michi*" or "*do*" (道- Way) kendo, is made up of the components "*kubi*" (首) and the radical "*shinnyu*" (辶). This basically denotes walking while peering in a certain direction. When writing the character, *kubi*, which means "neck" (indicative of human life), is written first, and corresponds with the expression "to put one's neck on the line". The *shinnyu* radical represents the starting point (at the top) and flows down just like a path. Thus, the character for *michi* can be interpreted as representing the path that one travels or pioneers during their lifetime."[1]

Thus, by attaching this suffix to the art in question, it is suggesting that it is a lifelong pursuit of learning and personal development. However, these are ideals, and their realistic application lies in the hands of each individual practitioner. Nevertheless, being a long-time exponent of Naginata, I can attest that the potential for physical and mental development through the study of Naginata is significant. What are the characteristics of Naginata that make it a valid way of encouraging personal growth?

2. Mechanics & Mentality of Engagement

Naginata is a combat art. Of course, it has little practical application in this day and age as far as learning techniques for self-defence. However, each time you face an opponent, it is a struggle to strike or be struck. Despite the absence of the ingredient of fear and reality of serious death or injury that warriors of old needed to overcome, the actual process and mechanics for engagement remains fairly much the same, and it is this process that lies at the essence of Naginata (and indeed other combat arts).

In simple terms, the process is as follows:

Facing opponent in on-guard position (*kamae*) → Mutual probing of defences/applying pressure (*seme-ai*) → Detection of openings and selection of techniques → Execution of a valid strike (*yuko-datotsu*) → Physical and psychological composure and alertness after the attack (*zanshin*).

In Naginata, emphasis is placed on valid strikes born of "a unity of spirit, weapon and body (気剣体一致) (*ki-ken-tai-itchi*)". From a technical standpoint, a valid cut is one in which the practitioner wields the 'blade' in the correct manner; which in turn is directly related to the manner in which the *naginata* is gripped (*tenouchi*) in fighting position (*kamae*). In addition, good bearing; smooth technique initiation; and correct strike path (*hasuji*)—all deriving from correct *kamae*- are vital elements. Subsequent to the valid strike, physical focus and composure are also demanded. As Oya explains, from a psychological standpoint, "striking with abandon", (*sutemi*) is required when executing a technique. The ability to strike with abandon, with utter conviction, is essentially a product of the unity of mind, spirit and technique (心気力一致- *shin-ki-ryoku-itchi*) occurring in a Naginata engagement. This unity of mind, spirit and technique is a prerequisite to dominating a match and enables an immediate strike in response to an opening produced during the *seme-ai* (probing) stage. Moreover, *zanshin*, or psychological composure following the strike, is concomitant with *sutemi*.[2]

In regards to the all-important *kamae*, Oya describes each stance as being comprised of an intangible psychological attitude, and a tangible physical attitude. When looking at *kamae* the following considerations are fundamental: Both sides are engaged in a clash of willpower. If this clash is perfectly balanced (50:50) then the engagement will end in deadlock. When the balance is tipped in favour of one side (60:40 or 70:30) an opportunity to make an attack arises. When assuming *kamae*, having an 'unwavering mind' and 'unyielding will' as internal qualities will result in a strong impenetrable *kamae* externally. Conversely, if the inside is shaky, this will result in the exterior *kamae* being open to attack. Thus, the *kamae* is the cornerstone for Naginata, and when two practitioners face-off, "it is a clash of wills, or two hard rocks (*ishi*—"will"— is also the word used for "rock").[3] This is the most fundamental aspect of Naginata.

Generally speaking, *seme* (the act of probing or forcing openings) is explained with the teaching of *san-sappo* (killing the spirit, killing the sword, and killing the *waza*). In essence *seme* is the

process of searching for a way to break the deadlock of *kamae*, putting yourself in an advantageous position, from where you produce an opportunity to execute a valid attack, as opposed to a random attack relying on chance. To win in Naginata you first have to win the stage of *seme* before striking. This means "creatively and dynamically hunting for openings". In other words: searching for movements or shortcomings in your opponent. This is not just passively watching for an opponent's shortcomings but needs to be a vigorous, progressive process of actually creating openings and striking opportunities by pressuring the opponent. Needless to say, they are trying to do the same thing to you.

An opening can be one that is observable, i.e., has form, such as an external physical lapse of *kamae*, or formless, such as sensed psychological weakness in *kamae*. As Oya says, "external form and internal psyche are opposite sides of the same coin: external form will influence the psyche and, conversely, psychological state will be manifest in outward appearance. If the opponent's *kamae* is steadfast and strong with no openings, then executing an attack will be futile. Firstly, the opponent's *kamae* must be broken or unsettled thereby creating an opening for attack. The opponent 'must be beaten before being struck.'"[4]

The main factors in searching for a way to break the deadlock of *kamae* and putting yourself in a situation to execute a valid strike, i.e. the main factors of *seme*, are considered to be: Taking the lead by spirit, (*ki*), dominating the centre, and adopting an advantageous distance (*ma-ai*). One might define "taking the lead by *ki*" as "a concentration of the will to win"—not winning by striking, but winning the phase prior to striking: "achieving *ki* superiority" or "winning by *kizeme*". "Dominating the centre" involves keeping the *kissaki* pointing at the centre of your opponent, whilst keeping their *kissaki* away from your own centre. Maintaining control of, or defending, your own centre will, of itself, destroy your opponent's centre and open them up for attack.[5]

Ki is a difficult term to define, but is considered a central component in Naginata and other *budo* arts. The All Japan Kendo Federation defines *ki* as:

> "The basic energy which exists in all matter that is born, develops, and dies. In human beings, it is the source of the kinetic energy responsible for perception, sensation, and instinct. In Kendo (also applicable to Naginata), it refers to the environment surrounding one's self and one's opponent, and it is the basic energy making the functioning of one's body and mind full and harmonious."[6]

There are many related terms such as *ki-atari* (showing an intention to attack in order to observe the reaction); *ki-gamae* (total alertness and preparedness to attack at an instant); *ki-haku* (the strength of spirit to face any situation); *ai-ki* (having one's *ki* in sync with the opponent) and so on. The rather hazy elements of "unity of mind, spirit and technique" were described by the famous pre-war Kendo master Takano Sasaburo in his classic book *Kendo* as follows:

> "*Shin-ki-ryoku-itchi* is the mental action induced from the senses of looking and listening, and the resulting immediate manifestation and application of a technique...When these three elements are in perfect synchronisation, then the opponent's weaknesses or openings can be taken advantage of, and victory obtained...Victory or defeat is not decided through random manoeuvring, but by promptly taking control of the opportunity as it appears."[7]

The *kokoro* (heart/mind) works as cognition, discretion, judgement (water). *Ki* is sparked by the judgement of the mind and provides the energy to put will in motion (wind). This energy fuels the execution of *waza* (wave). Just like the wind blowing over a body of water creating waves. In other words *shin-ki-ryoku-itchi* is:

Cognition/discretion → mobilisation of will → execution of technique

When this sequence is completed instantaneously and in unison it leads to a valid strike (*yuko-datotsu*).[8]

3. Striking Opportunities & Waza

Techniques are executed in accordance with the opponent's movement and reactions during the course of mutual *seme*. However, not only is manipulation of the *naginata* to execute the attack important, but so too is the psychological workings of the process.

The following is an analysis of the antecedents of *waza:*
When executing *waza*, use *ki* to take the initiative (*sen*) to cause a jump in the opponent's *kokoro* → change in form → start of the technique → mid-technique → completion of technique.

If the opponent's *kamae* becomes unbalanced due to your *ki* and taking the initiative (*sen*), move in immediately for the strike. In regards to *sen* Takano Sasaburo defined the "three *sen*" as "*sen-sen-no-sen*"; "*sen*"; and "*go-no-sen*". *Sen-sen-no-sen* refers to having the keen insight to quickly sense the opponent's start, and then taking the initiative and striking first. This is the most important *sen*, as it completely stymies the opponent's moves. *Sen* refers to the situation when the opponent perceives an opening and initiates attack, but you strike in turn before their attack is successful. *Go-no-sen* refers to the situation where the opponent has made a full attack but you are able to destroy their initiative by parrying and counter-attacking when their *waza* is coming to completion.

When you take the initiative and probe the opponent using *ki*, they will be prompted into making an attack first. When this happens, maintain the initiative and respond by executing *oji-waza* (counter-technique). Thus, *oji-waza*—although referred to as counter-attack techniques—are actually proactive techniques made by prompting and adjusting to your opponent's *shikake*-waza. In order to do this psychological initiative must be maintained throughout the encounter.

The following striking opportunities are listed based on the various stages occurring during an engagement with an opponent:[9]

a. Striking when your opponent is immobile
Control your opponent to the point where they cannot strike; cannot retreat; cannot move at all; and then strike. (This is as when a snake stares at a frog, mesmerising it, and is complex and extremely difficult).

↓

b. Striking when your opponent shows signs of moving or their kamae starts to change
Discern when your opponent has decided to strike; the moment *ki* is about to take form; a sense of movement; and strike. (*Fumikomi-waza, ni/sandan-waza, harai-waza* etc.)

↓

c. Striking when your opponent is about to attack
Ki first begins to take physical form in the movement of the sword tip and hands as the opponent contemplates and winds up for the attack. When you discern the beginnings of movement, step in and strike. (*Debana-waza*).

The techniques hitherto are considered superior by virtue of being the result of openings created by applying mental pressure on the opponent. These techniques are described as "striking the heart (*kokoro*) with the heart"[10], "striking essence (*iro*) with essence"[11], or "striking scent (*nioi*) with scent".[12] The opponent's intentions to attack are revealed in changes in the eyes, facial expression, and also a change in the *kamae*. These techniques are regarded as superior - those that follow are considered passive and are not afforded the same idealistic value.

↓

d. Striking at the start of your opponent's technique
The opponent's *ki* manifests itself in the form of slight movement. Strike at the unbalanced point just as the opponent begins technique execution. (*Uchiotoshi-waza, makiotoshi-waza*).
This stage is indicated by the opponent starting to lean forward, or sinking slightly from the knees. These initial movements must be discerned immediately and taken advantage of.

↓

e. Striking in the middle stage of your opponent's technique
Strike as your opponent's technique is in mid-flight, taking advantage of their unbalanced posture. (*Nuki-waza, ukenagashi-waza*). This is where the opponent's initial movements start to

take the shape of a technique, and counter-striking at this point is essentially striking the beginning of their technique i.e. before it is able to manifest itself fully.[13]

↓

f. Striking when your opponent's technique is nearing completion.
Strike at the point that your opponent's psychological, physical and technical impetus is just reaching full extension, and they are thinking that their attack was successful.
(*uke-waza*).

↓

g. After your opponent's attack has been completed
Strike when your opponent has exceeded the point of full extension and their overall posture is ineffective. (*Uchiotoshi-waza*). Striking at this stage means to escape a full attack and finish the process with your own attack.[14]

These are sometimes simplified as the "three unforgivable signs": The start of a technique; when the technique has been blocked; when the technique has reached its conclusion. The AJNF defines striking opportunities as:

1. *Debana*—Just as the opponent is about to launch into an attack.
2. When the opponent is moving back from a clash at close-quarters (*seri-ai*).
3. When they have completed an attack, and are temporarily physically and mentally spent.
4. When the opponent freezes, and is unable to react.
5. When the opponent is changing *kamae* (*mochikae*).
6. When the opponent is breathing in deeply.
7. When the opponent succumbs to any of the "four sicknesses" (*shikai*—'surprise', 'fear', 'doubt', and 'confusion'), or *kogishin* (the mind that experiences hesitation or doubt when executing a technique).
8. *Kyo-jitsu*—Falsehood and truth. In other words, bringing oneself into the *jitsu* (truth) state (showing no weakness), thereby forcing the opponent into the *kyo* state where they will reveal openings in their *kamae*. Strike when they are in a state of *kyo*, but be careful when they are showing great concentration and no weakness in the *jitsu* state.

As soon as you see an opening (*suki*) in the opponent's mind, *kamae*, or movement, you must be ready and able to attack instantaneously without needing to mull over the *suki* as it appears. This state of constant readiness is referred to as *kan*. A match is decided in a split second, and the chance to win the match can also vanish is as much time. The Naginata practitioner must strive to never let opportunities escape. With a strong opponent, *suki* are few and far between.

Now that we have looked at the inner and outer workings of engaging an opponent, I will turn my attention to the characteristics and benefits of Naginata.

4. Characteristics of Naginata

Category				Content
Theory	Naginata Outline			History, characteristics, training methodology, facilities and equipment, regulations
Technical Aspects	Kihon (Basics)	*Shizental* (Posture)		Posture when standing and holding the *naginata*
		Reiho (Etiquette)		*Ritsurei (standing bow); zarei (sitting bow)*
		Kamae (Stances)		*Chudan-no-kamae; gedan; hasso; waki-gamae; jodan*
		Tai-sabaki (Footwork)		*Okuri-ashi; ayumi-ashi; hiraki-ashi; fumikae-ashi; tsugi-ashi*
		Datotsu	*Datotsu-bui*	*Shomen; soku-men; sune; do; kote; tsuki* (throat)
			Striking	*Furiage* (lift up straight); *machikae* (change grip); *furikaeshi* (overhead twirl)
			Thrusting	*Chokutotsu* (straight thrust); *kuridashi* (extended thrust)
		Uke-kata (Blocking)		*Ha-bu* (with the blade); *e-bu* (with the shaft)
		Furi-kata (Swinging)		*Joge-buri* (vertical); *yoko-buri* (horizontal); *naname-buri* (diagonal-up, down); *furikaeshi*
		Uchikaeshi		Continuous striking moving forwards and backwards; grip; distance
	Waza (Techniques)	*Shikake-waza*	*Harai*	Knock the opponent's *naginata* from the left or right (*omote-ura*) with the *ha-bu or e-bu*
			Fumikomi	Striking with *hiraki-ashi or okuri-ashi*
			Debana	Striking just as your opponent is about to
			Nidan	Two continuous strikes
			Sandan	Three continuous strikes
		Oji waza	*Uke*	Block with the *e-bu* or the *ha-bu*
			Nuki	Avoid opponent's strike then follow up with your own attack
			Ukenagashi	Move out of the way of opponent's attack as you parry and slide their *naginata* off with the *ha-bu*
			Uchiotoshi	Knock opponent's *naginata* down with the *ha-bu* or *e-bu*
			Makiotoshi	Use the curve of the *ha-bu (sori)* to flick the opponent's *naginata* down
		Oyo	Shikake-Oji Kata	Performing set forms *(kata)* or techniques in pairs; *kiai; ma-ai; zanshin*
Competition (*Kyogi*)				1. Shiai-kyogi- Individuals event; Teams event 2. Engi-kyogi- Designated forms; Free forms

The table defines the technical and theoretical components of Naginata. By training and gaining a keen understanding of this curriculum, the practitioner theoretically gleans the following benefits:

1. Etiquette and good manners are always emphasised in Naginata. This emphasis gradually becomes second nature to the practitioner, and even outside the *dojo* it becomes habitual to show appropriate courtesies to other people.
2. Naginata utilises a full array of techniques on both the left and right sides. There are also many subtle movements utilised to manipulate the *naginata* such as *mochikae* (changing grip or *kamae*), *kuridashi* (throwing the *naginata* out to extend distance) and *kurikomi* (pulling the *naginata* in) and so on. Learning to manipulate the *naginata* in relaxed and nimble fashion develops coordination.
3. In Naginata, the practitioner trains to be able to move in all directions, backwards and forwards, pivot, and be able to adjust speed and power instantaneously and rationally. Such training nurtures individual flexibility, balance, power, and reflexes.
4. Practising Naginata Fosters physical stamina and enhances intuitive ability.
5. Naginata is a physical pursuit which can be adapted to suit practitioners of all ages, and can be practised throughout one's lifetime.

The physical benefits of training in Naginata are relatively easy to discern. As with diligent participation in any form of physical exercise, you quickly notice a boost in energy and vitality. Apart from overall physical fitness, as perfection of form is stressed in Naginata, long-time practitioners will naturally develop a straight posture and an air of elegance in movement as well as coordination and muscular flexibility.

The mental/spiritual benefits are more difficult to gage. The emphasis on etiquette (*rei*) encourages the practitioner to treat others with courtesy and respect. We rely heavily on training partners or opponents to improve, and positive cooperation and feelings of gratefulness and humility are encouraged and expressed

with rituals of bowing and speech patterns and so on. Also, the quest to master the techniques of Naginata requires patience, resilience, determination, discipline, concentration, powers of analysis, vigour, and insight. Anybody who is not blessed with such virtues will be given ample opportunity to develop them as through developing proficiency in Naginata. Moreover, the rigour of training and constant yelling (*kiai*) and attacking in a controlled environment (*dojo*) is a particularly effective way of relieving stress!

How does one become mentally stronger through practicing Naginata? Of course, this depends entirely on the efforts and intentions of the individual practitioner. However, through the action of facing off against an opponent who is trying to attack, the Naginata practitioner is faced with many difficulties to overcome, the greatest if which is not so much the strength or skill of the opponent, but one's own personal weaknesses. To be more precise, personal development through Naginata is related to overcoming what are referred to as the *shikai* (four sicknesses of the heart or mind).

As mentioned above, the four sicknesses are 'surprise', 'fear', 'doubt', and 'confusion'. When any of these weaknesses are present, openings will result, and defeat is inevitable. For example, when faced with an opponent who is particularly large, has a strong presence, or is renowned for their skill, this could incite fear. If they attempt something unexpected such as a flashy technique, you may find yourself becoming a little surprised. Your opponent may try to entice you into making an attack against your will by leaving a target open for attack. This may cause doubt as you wonder whether it is safe to make an attack. Similarly you may be momentarily confused as to the best course of action or which technique to employ. This confused mental state resulting in hesitation is referred to as *kogishin*.

These are just some examples of what happens in the thick of 'battle' with an opponent who is trying to defeat you. To be able to take control of the encounter, you must be able to suppress these emotions and make instantaneous judgements and attack with confidence and conviction. Not suppressing these emotions

will result in hesitation and annihilation. After all, it only takes a fraction of a second for a cut to be made, or a point to be scored. Even the slightest hesitation can be disastrous.

Controlling your surprise, fears, doubts, and confusion is easier said than done when faced with an actual opponent. That is why it is often said in *budo* that in order to defeat your opponent, first you need to defeat yourself. In other words, you need to be able to develop the power to control your emotions. If you lose to your emotions, you lose to your opponent. In this sense, your opponent in a match or training is a valuable partner whose cooperation affords you the opportunity to face your fears front-on, with no choice to run away from them. This can be extremely frustrating at first, but consciously tackling your weaknesses in this way is how Naginata can serve as a vehicle for continual character development.

Thus, your opponent should always be respected for their assistance in your progress. If you are successful in striking your opponent, you are teaching them of their weaknesses, and likewise a successful strike made against you is a perfect opportunity to assess your own faults. Hence, your opponent should be afforded the utmost respect and courtesy. As you become proficient in the techniques of Naginata, you will find that when you get struck, it is more often than not a problem resulting from the 'four illnesses' rather than a technical deficiency, or something special about your opponent.

An important point to note here is that Naginata interaction is based on trust and observance of the rules of engagement. Although both practitioners are vying to strike each other, it is considered weak or cowardly to gain victory through trickery or underhanded means. Of course, learning to develop strategy is an important part of overall development, but at the same time it is considered virtuous to fight 'fairly and squarely'. You can win sometimes by fooling your opponent, but essentially that is taking the easy route, and only fooling yourself. Having said that, you should be prepared for any kind of opponent, but still strive to deal with them doing Naginata as 'correctly' and as 'honestly' as possible.

As your understanding of Naginata develops, you will nurture many attributes and strengths which will serve you well not only in the *dojo* but in aspects of your everyday life. You will become confident, and be able to remain calm in all sorts of adverse situations. In other words, you will be able to nurture such qualities as *ki-gurai*, *heijoshin*, and *fudoshin*, etc.

Ki-gurai (Sense of pride / Confidence / Presence)

Through many years of training in Naginata, it is hoped that the practitioner will develop a sense of dignity and elegance in movement and disposition. You will naturally learn to discern between right and wrong, good and bad, and reach a level beyond concern for winning and losing. You will have an air of confidence, and radiate an aura of vitality. These attributes are cultivated through continued training with the aims of developing not only physical technique but also mental or spiritual strength and a refined sense of morality. Collectively, all of these attributes are referred to as *ki-gurai*.

Heijoshin (Placid state of mind)

Heijoshin refers to a state of mind in which one is calm and collected, and it could be said to be the most basic unfettered mindset of human beings. When confronted with something frightening or out of the ordinary, this calmness should not be unsettled. Often people become confused or lose confidence when challenged with something they are not used to, or do not know about. Remaining unfazed in such circumstances is referred to as *heijoshin*. Developing confidence and a brave mindset able to deal with any kind of adverse circumstance is a skill or attribute which is beneficial to everyday living.

Fudoshin (Immovable heart)

Fudoshin is similar in meaning to *heijoshin*. It is a state of mind which is not moved or distracted by anyone or anything. It is a flexible state of mind which enables you to respond to various changing situations. In other words, it is referring to the mental strength which enables you to maintain *heijoshin*.

Zanshin

Another important concept related to the mental and physical

aspects of Naginata is *zanshin*. *Zanshin* refers to the body posture and state of mind in which one is alert and ready to respond or counterattack instantly, even after having already made a successful strike. This is achieved in Naginata by putting the proper distance between yourself and the opponent after an attack (usually in *chudan*) in order to be ready for a counterattack. Even if you think your attack was decisive, and even if the referees have already put their flags up (in the case of a match) you should never let your guard down. You must always be prepared for the worst. In the days of mortal combat, this mindset had obvious advantages, but even in the modern sport version of Naginata, this is still regarded as an essential part of what constitutes a valid attack. Dropping your guard immediately after making a successful strike may result in the point being nullified by the referees. Thus, what you do after the attack is a vital part of what constitutes the whole entity of a strike. Therefore, *zanshin* is emphasised in every aspect of training. Always maintaining mental and physical alertness in Naginata training nurtures your power of concentration, and overall perception. Again, these are attributes which are useful in life outside the *dojo*.

In conclusion, it is thought that by striving to practise Naginata 'correctly' and 'honestly' in accordance with the principles stipulated by the ruling body, you will nurture a sense of fair play (justice/honesty), humility, bravery, courtesy, discipline, and perseverance. Of course, this requires effort, and doesn't come easily.

Students of the IBU Naginata club

Part 2- Competition and Forms

1. Shiai

A valid men strike is scored in a Naginata Shiai-kyogi match

Shiai or participation in matches is an effective way to gage the results of your efforts in training, and find new things that require attention. Thus, you should be well-prepared for *shiai*, realising it is an important training opportunity where you will be able to test your true ability. Of course, nobody enters a competition with the intention of losing. We all want to win, and not having that attitude would be disrespectful to your opponent who is taking the match seriously. How you win and your demeanour is an important aspect. Again, the term 'correct' is of the essence here. One of the characteristics of Naginata as opposed to other competitive sports is that ideally, the competitor should fight cleanly and as closely to the rules as possible. This is the ideal in any sport, but there is always leeway given and sportspeople are rarely criticized even if they take play to the edge of what is defined as acceptable in the rules, just as long as they don't cross the line and break them.

In Naginata, however, it is considered desirable to keep as far away as possible from the line that separates legitimate and foul play. Ideally, one should fight in accordance to the straight line down the middle. One should fight ferociously and with all the skill one can muster, but without resorting to trickery, and always while maintaining respect for the opponent and referees. If one does Naginata purely as a sport with no other objectives than obtaining good competition results, then that is the individual's prerogative. However, if the practitioner wishes to acquire the above mentioned attributes and train in Naginata as a way of self-development, then *shiai* should not be considered the sole objective *per se*, but an important part of the process. Always do *shiai* to the best of your ability, win with modesty, and lose graciously. There is much to be learned from victory and defeat, as long as you keep an open mind. Attitudes demonstrated before, during and after a *shiai* are a good indication of the practitioners understanding of the principles of Naginata.

Technically speaking, in many respects Naginata is an art very similar in nature to Kendo. Apart from the longer weapon involved, the basic armour (*bogu*) is the same as that used in Kendo (with the addition of *sune-ate* to protect the shins, and split-finger *kote*), and so are the criteria required for scoring a point in matches. The main differences lie in the left and right sided *kamae* or stances used in Naginata, and the huge array of ambidextrous techniques.

Having used the term *shiai*, it must be pointed out that there are actually two different kinds of competition in Naginata. The first kind, Shiai-kyogi, is that similar to Kendo in which *bogu* is utilised, and the aim is to outscore the opponent in *sanbon-shobu* (first to get two points within the designated time limit). There are also three *Shinpan*, and they use calls and red and white flags similar to those used in Kendo.

The other type of competition is called Engi-kyogi and is conducted by pitting a team of two against another pair in which they perform set forms or techniques. Within Engi-kyogi there are two variations. One is a competition performing a set number, usually five, of the Shikake-Oji techniques (see Chapter 3). These

incorporate basic Naginata movements and *waza* (techniques) into pre-arranged sequences. The attacker is called *shikake*, and the defender or counter-attacker is *oji*. These forms, of which there are eight, are not only used as a competition event or in grading examinations where the level of proficiency attained by the competitor is judged, but are also a good way for people to be introduced to the art of Naginata, as they utilise all the basic techniques and body movements. Beginners and advanced practitioners alike spend much time practising Shikake-Oji as it is one of the most basic and important forms of training.

The other type of match found in Engi-kyogi is the All Japan Naginata Federation Kata. This is a different set of *Kata* (sequences of choreographed movements) utilising a wooden *naginata*, similar in function to the *bokuto* (wooden sword) found in Kendo. The bamboo and oak *naginata* used for *bogu* training and *shiai* is used in Shikake-Oji. The set of Kata consists of seven forms, and involves some extremely sophisticated techniques. Due to the intricacy of the forms, and the danger involved in using a solid wooden *naginata*, they are in principle only practised from the rank of 3rd *dan* and above.

In *shiai* there are many similarities to Kendo in what defines a valid strike. The main difference, apart from some of the techniques, and the side-on *kamae*, is what happens after a cut has been made. Kendo practitioners are encouraged to keep the momentum moving forward after making a strike. However, in Naginata the opposite is encouraged, and it is expected that the *naginata* and body be pulled back after making the cut, followed by *zanshin*. In fact, one of the common mistaken tendencies for Kendo people who decide to take up Naginata is to keep running through after an attack and to have the body facing forwards instead of to the side. Similarly, many people who move to Kendo from Naginata often find themselves being remonstrated for pulling back after making a cut with a *shinai (*bamboo sword). The difference in cutting styles stems from the different lengths of the weapons. Still, the criteria for valid points are very similar between the two arts. In accordance with the All Japan Naginata Federation *Tournament Regulations*, a *yuko-datotsu* (valid strike) is defined in the following way:

> *"An accurate strike with the naginata's datotsu-bu (monouchi) must be made to a datotsu-bui (stipulated target area) with correct posture and vigorous spirit, while calling out the name of the target which is being struck."*

The actual targets in Naginata are also similar to those in Kendo. However, Naginata has one more target area, the *sune*, or shins. Also, more emphasis is placed on striking *sokumen* (*yoko-men* in Kendo), and *mochikae* (changing the stance or side on which one holds the *naginata*) and attacking from *hasso-no-kamae* or another *kamae*. Actually, the *kamae* utilised in Naginata are identical to those found in Kendo. The difference being that whereas *chudan-no-kamae* is the mainstay for what is considered orthodox Kendo, Naginata practitioners are encouraged to use as many *kamae* and techniques as possible in their training and competition, even though *chudan* is considered the most fundamental stance. This has significant weight when a *shiai* result is decided by referee's decision (*hantei*), as is often the case when the score remains even.

Target Areas	*Naginata*
Men	*Monouchi* (15-20cm from the *kissaki*)
Sokumen	25° -30° either side of the *men's* centreline
Kote	*Monouchi* (15-20cm from the *kissaki*)
Do	*Monouchi* (15-20cm from the *kissaki*)
Sune	When striking with the *ha-bu* (blade), strike with the *monouchi*. When striking with the *e-bu*, strike with the spot about 20cm from the *ishizuki*
Inko (Throat)	*kissaki*

Note: *Tsuki* is prohibited up to high school level, and *tsuki* with the *ishizuki* has been outlawed completely as it is dangerous.

Another difference between Kendo and Naginata is that one rarely sees *tai-atari* (body clashing) in Naginata. When Naginata exponents clash and come into close-quarters (*seri-ai*), they will attempt to strike *hiki-waza* (particularly *sune*), but will be called to separate (*wakare*) if proactive attacking is not forthcoming.

Also, *fumikomi-ashi* (stamping as the strike is made) is not as pronounced in Naginata, and loud superfluous shouting is certainly not encouraged apart from at the instant of contact, although this is so in Kendo circles.

As is the case with Kendo, in order to obtain impartial and accurate decisions in Naginata competition it is necessary to have three referees (Shinpan) as it is impossible for one person to observe a match from a number of angles at the same time. Having three people observing a match from various perspectives diminishes the possibility of misjudgements. A referee must have confidence in their own judgements and make impartial decisions or calls accordingly. However, if two other referees offer a conflicting calls, the judgement of the minority will be nullified. In the case of confusion it is possible to hold *gogi*, a meeting where the three referees temporarily halt a match in order to consult or discuss a matter of contention. All of these measures are necessary as referees play an important role in the propagation of Naginata. If their judgements are flawed or biased, this will discourage competitors and spectators, and portray a mistaken image of Naginata. The responsibilities of referees cannot be overstressed, and one wrong judgement can have far-reaching effects on the practitioner's future development or continuation in Naginata.

Apart from judging which strikes are valid or not, the referee also has the added responsibility of penalising competitors for foul play. As I have already mentioned, although foul play by competitors should be avoided as much as possible, anything can happen during the course of a match. The following acts as outlined in Articles 25–31 of the official INF *Tournament Regulations* are penalised in Naginata:

Article 25. When a player insults or says something damaging to the opponent or referees.
Article 26. A *jogai* (out of bounds) foul will be called when one foot totally steps out of the match area, or both players step out of the match area at the same time, falling over with a part of body outside the area, or propping the body up with the *naginata* outside the area line.
Article 27. Striking *men* with the *e-bu* (shaft) of the

naginata, holding onto the opponent's *naginata* or holding it between any part of the body, intentionally hitting around the ear area or any area not protected by *bogu*, or any other dangerous behaviour.
Article 28. When a player unfairly pushes or shoves the opponent outside the match area, or stops for no good reason during the match.
Article 29. Remaining in *seri-ai* (close quarters) with no intention of fighting, and ignoring the command to separate (*wakare*).
Article 30. When an unnecessary comment is uttered.
Article 31. Dropping the *naginata*, or when the *men* falls off.

At this point I will also introduce my own translation of *hansoku* from the most recent AJNF match regulations. The official regulations referred to by the INF (in English) were last updated in 1993, but have not kept up with a number of changes in the Japanese rules over the last decade. This is a serious problem which is being addressed by the INF at the time of this book's publication.
(Unofficial translation of foul play):

Article 29. A *jogai-hansoku* (out of bounds foul) will be called in the following circumstances:

1.When one foot totally steps out of the match area. If both competitors step out of bounds, the first one will be penalised, or both competitors if they step out of the match area at exactly the same time.
2. When a player falls over with a part of the body outside the area.
3. When a player props the body up with the *naginata* outside the match area.
Article 30. The following actions will be penalised:
1. Striking *men* with the *e-bu* (shaft) of the *naginata*.
2. Intentionally hitting around the ear, or any area not protected by *bogu*.
3. Holding onto the opponent's *naginata*, or clamping it between some part of the body.
4. Excessive pushing or any other needless behaviour which

stops the match.
5. Showing no will to fight by remaining in close-quarters, or ignoring referee calls to separate (*wakare*).
6. Superfluous remarks or utterances.
7. Dropping the *naginata*.
8. When a piece of *bogu* comes untied and falls off.
9. Actions considered dangerous in any way.
10. Any other forbidden acts.

Two penalties constitute one point for the opponent. In the most serious cases of violent or blatantly disrespectful conduct, the offender may be disqualified from the match altogether, and two points automatically awarded to the opponent. This would be the equivalent of a red-card, one of the most shameful things that could happen in Naginata, and the consequences would be far more serious than, say, a one match suspension. Fight hard, but play by the rules.

2. Shikake-Oji

Shikake-Oji is practised not only as a way to perfect the array of Naginata techniques from the beginner level up, but is also an important match event, and an integral segment of any grading examination.

Shikake-Oji is a set of eight different *kata* which make use of the *naginata* constructed with a wooden shaft and a bamboo blade. Shikake is the initiator, and Oji is the "counter-attacker". Naturally, as *kata*, all the movements are pre-determined, but the point of Shikake-Oji is to not only teach the basic Naginata *waza*, but also to encourage instant movement and adaptability to any situation. Through practising Shikake-Oji one learns correct Naginata etiquette, *kamae*, body movement, *tenouchi* (grip), *ma-ai*, breathing, striking chances, *zanshin*, principles of attack and defence, correct posture, *kiai*, and so on. In fact, Shikake-Oji contains the fundamentals for every aspect of the art of Naginata, and it is how beginners are initiated, and high ranking practitioners stay polished.

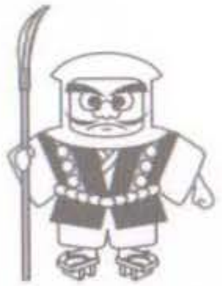
Apart from various *waza*, you will also find that all Naginata *kamae* are utilised in the sequence as well. These are *chudan-no-kamae*, *gedan-no-kamae*, *wakigamae*, *jodan-no-kamae*, and *hasso-no-kamae*. One of the main differences compared to Kendo however is the ambidextrous nature of Naginata, as the stance is side-on rather than front-on, and all of the above-mentioned techniques and *kamae* can be executed from either the left or right side of the body. Shikake-Oji encourages the ability to use techniques from either side.

A pair competing in an Engi-kyogi match

Generally in Engi-kyogi competition, two pairs (with red or white ribbons tied around the waist) march to the start line. At the command they go through the bowing ritual and commence the designated forms. Even though there are eight Shikake-Oji forms altogether, usually only three are performed in competition. When the pairs have finished, they march off the court, and then the head referee blows a whistle, to which all three referees instantaneously raise their red or white flags to indicate whom they thought was the superior pair.

Shikake-Oji matches usually occur before Shiai-kyogi, and are hotly contested. Much emphasis is placed on beautiful form in Naginata, and Shikake-Oji epitomises this. Competitors even take care of small details like whether their hair is tied back and tidy, and is similar in style with their partner. Timing of entry into

the court, departure, bows, going into *kamae*, and so on are all immaculately performed and many pairs practise relentlessly with each other to get the details just right. In Shikake-Oji the judges are looking at the following factors:



Benkei's Pointers

Attitude
Clothing: Worn neatly.
Posture: Natural, unforced posture.
Etiquette: Etiquette must be conducted correctly and in a relaxed manner.
Accuracy
Furiage (lifting *naginata* overhead), *mochikae* (changing *kamae*), *furikaeshi* (large circular *waza* where the *naginata* is spun overhead), *kuridashi* and *kurikomi* (sliding the *naginata* in or out to adjust the distance), body movement and the handling of the *naginata* should be big, accurate, and in perfect unison.
Datotsu
Posture: Body movement and positioning should be adequate.
Ma-ai: Maintaining and striking or receiving at the correct distance.
Hand Positioning: Accurately striking the target.
Tenouchi: The direction of the cutting blade (*hasuji*) should be correct.
Kiai: Loud and clear voice.
Eyes: Calm and perceptive, and always focused on the other person.
Zanshin: Unrelenting *zanshin* accompanying the execution of a technique.
Evidence of Training
Harmony between Shikake and Oji; balance of *waza*.
Breathing: Breathing should be in sync.

3. Kata

In *budo* training, *kata* (predetermined forms or patterns) has been traditionally emphasised in order to pass on the knowledge and techniques of each school. Great warriors of the Warring States period and early Tokugawa period devised systems of *kata* in order to pass on their wisdom— amassed through years of actual combat experience. The resulting set forms became the basis for ensuing traditional martial schools (*ryuha*). *Kata* are supposed to be choreographed sequences of movements which contain the very essence of the teachings of the particular school, and extraneous movements are excluded. The practitioner is only able to access the knowledge contained within through much hard training in the *kata* techniques. The student obeys the *kata* teachings of the master, following their instructions to the letter. In theory, through constant and arduous repetition of *kata*, the techniques gradually become a natural part of the adept's movement, and the essence becomes a part of their being.[15]

In the modern education environment, this kind of rote memorisation methodology could be perceived as something which stymies individuality, creative development, and the initiative and skills to solve problems on your own. However, in *budo*, there is the teaching of *shu-ha-ri* (守破離). This refers to the process of development where the first stage of *shu* refers to the act of learning the techniques (through *kata*), then being proficient enough to apply them or test them in any situation (*ha*), and finally the enlightened stage of breaking away and moving freely in one's own style (*ri*). This is a lifelong process, and the reasoning behind it suggests that individuality and continued development is the ultimate objective, but a solid base is required first. I sometimes equate this process (admittedly rather simplistically) with a university education: Undergraduate Degree, Masters Degree, and finally a Ph.D.

The AJNF Naginata Kata were actually developed quite recently, in 1977. What was the process and motivation for creating this new set of Kata?

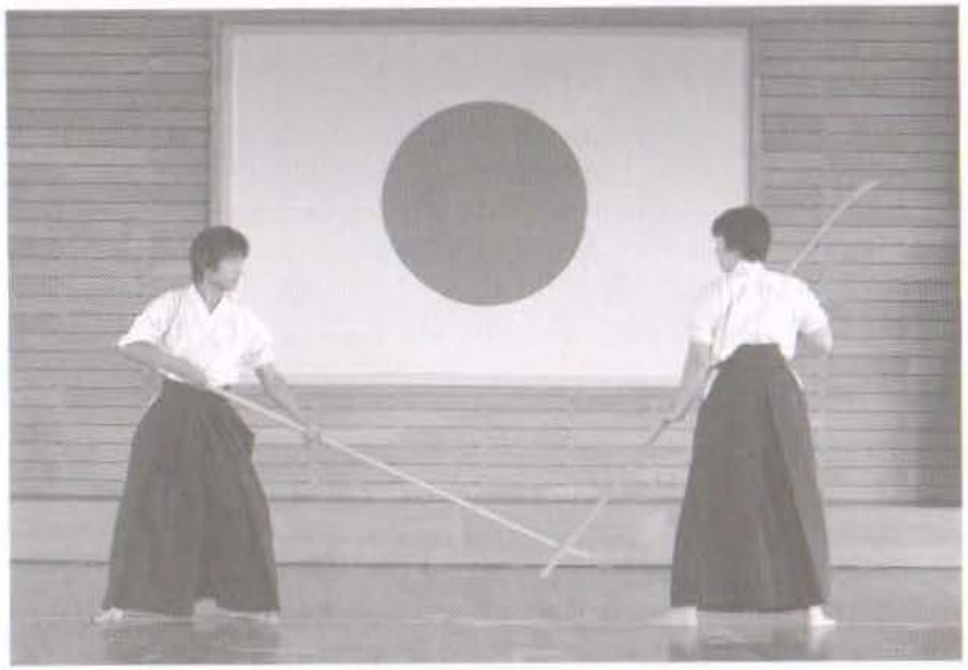
As we have seen, after WWII General McArthur adopted a policy banning the practise of *budo* arts due to their connection with the Japanese ultra-nationalist militaristic regime. *Budo* was eventually reinstated in piecemeal fashion a number of years after Japan's defeat. In 1953, the All Japan Kendo Federation held the first (post-war) Kyoto Taikai, which has been held every year since in the month of May at the Butokuden *dojo* in Kyoto. The All Japan Kendo Federation had just been officially formed at that time, but there was no official Naginata Federation in existence. However, a number of well-known Naginata sensei also attended this inaugural Kendo tournament, and this acted as the impetus to create a federation to get Naginata back on its feet as an independent entity rather than one under the umbrella of the Kendo Federation.

To fit the new ideals of democracy encouraged in Japan after the war, a new sportified Naginata was designed to be easily participated in by young and old alike. Naginata took on various competitive aspects as its popularity increased, and many began to lament that the true principles of *naginata* use were being supplemented or ignored for unorthodox point-scoring techniques or tricks. With concerns that the true nature and characteristics of the *naginata* could become obsolete and forgotten, in 1973 the Naginata Federation devised the *Concept of Naginata* committee, and a *Kata Development* committee in an attempt to set the basic spiritual and technical principles in concrete to prevent Naginata from "eroding" any further away from its origins. At the same time, Naginata was re-evaluated in terms of relevance to the changing times.

With regard to the formation of new Naginata Kata, it was decided to incorporate as many facets of traditional Naginata as possible into an advanced set of *kata* which would serve to enhance comprehension of the more sophisticated technical and mental aspects which were difficult to impart with the existing Shikake-Oji. This, it was hoped, would ensure the survival of 'true' Naginata for future generations.

Instructors from many old schools scattered around Japan gathered, debated, researched, and devised a set of seven

naginata vs. *naginata kata* which embodied all the subtleties of technique, roundness of spirit, and beauty of Naginata form to be mastered by advanced practitioners, ensuring the survival of the art's unique characteristics. Finalising the set of Kata took five years to complete, and the characteristics of each school such as the *kamae* and representative techniques were recorded on film and assessed by the committee. The finished product is a mixture of various aspects of traditional styles brought together.



Two students at the IBU practise Naginata Kata

The *naginata* used is considerably more sophisticated than the usual practise *naginata*, and in order to do the Kata properly requires knowledge and skill in utilising the refined curves and corners (*mune* and *shinogi* etc.) on the sculptured wooden blade. Due to the subtlety of the techniques, and the inherent danger involved in using a wooden *naginata*, the Zen Nihon Naginata Kata (the name was changed from Zen Nihon Naginata Renmei Kata in 2002) are in principle only taught to practitioners 3rd *dan* and above. They are included in 4th *dan* and above grading examinations, and are also an event at high level tournaments such as the National Sports Meet and the All Japan Championships.

Kata matches are held much in the same way as the Shikake-Oji matches. Two teams of two enter the court, perform the designated three forms, and five referees raise their red or white flags as the competitors leave the court, thereby deciding the victorious pair. The referees look for strong *kiai*, accuracy of technique, timing, synchronisation, and a demonstration of the understanding of *riai*, or the principles that underlie the Kata. Naturally aspects such as tidy appearance, and simultaneous movement when entering and leaving the court, and bowing are also carefully watched. It is often minor details that decide the winner when all else is even. Everything has to be perfectly timed right up to the very end.

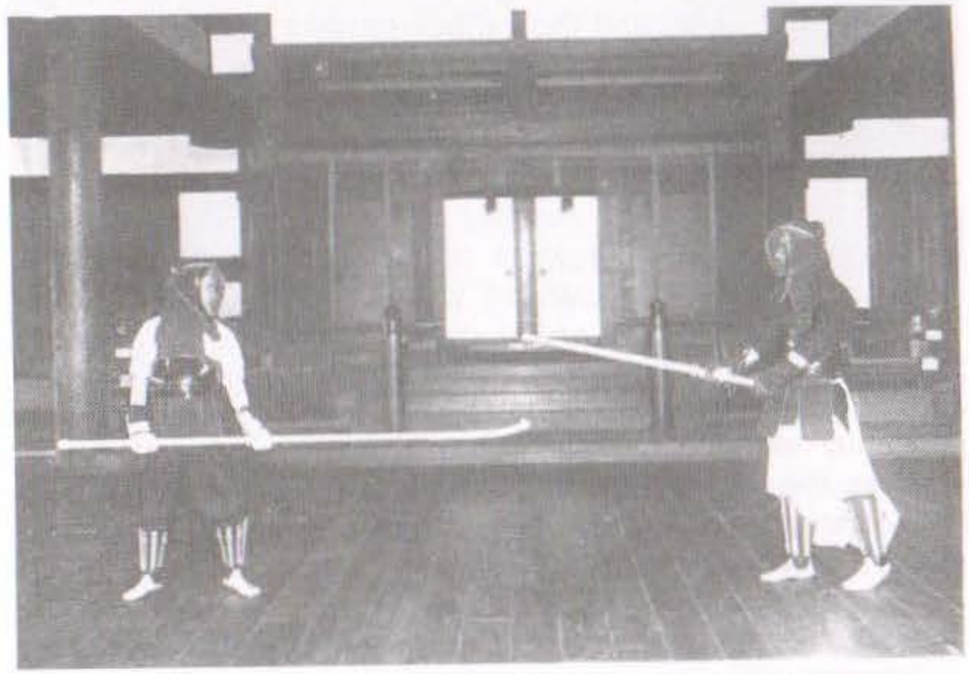
In Kata, any mistakes appear more obvious than they would in Shikake-Oji, requiring complete mastery of all the *kihon* basics to be able to perform them properly. This is facilitated by the fact that the techniques are so subtle that they make full use of the *sori* (curvature in the blade), *shinogi* (side of the blade), and are much longer in duration demonstrating many techniques which would be impossible to do properly with a *shiai naginata* (oak shaft with bamboo blade taped on).

4. Ishu-jiai

It is interesting to note that in pre-war Naginata, the bulk of training consisted of *kata* utilising a *naginata* versus a sword. *Kata* with *naginata* versus *naginata* was virtually unheard of, and whenever a Naginata practitioner donned armour and engaged in a match, it was often against a Kendo exponent, something referred to as *ishu-jiai*.

Some of the most publicised *ishu-jiai* where women with *naginata* took on sword-wielding men were in the aforementioned *gekiken-kogyo* demonstration matches of the Meiji period. A glance at the tournament programs reveals a small number of women participants, all of whom utilised the *naginata*. Again, with the formation of the Dai Nihon Butokukai in 1895, and the related annual demonstration matches, we also find records of women Naginata experts who were pitted against swordsmen. Predictably, these matches provided a popular spectacle, especially when the

woman overcame her foe. Although defeat at the hands of a woman would be a source of embarrassment for many swordsmen, often it was considered unavoidable due to the advantage of length that the *naginata* had over the sword. Some, however, considered this merely an excuse.



Pre-war photo of Naginata versus Kendo (1939)

Nowadays, the bulk of official Naginata matches are conducted as *naginata* versus *naginata*. However, in special festival-like tournaments such as the famous Kyoto Taikai held in May every year at the Butokuden in Kyoto, spectators are sometimes able to witness an *ishu-jiai*. Also, at official Naginata tournaments, often a five-man team of local Kendo experts are pitted against a team of Naginata exponents as a supplementary attraction to liven up the day's proceedings. The Naginata team usually ends up victorious. The crowd is not only pleased to see women defeating men despite the obvious physical disadvantages, but also to see the Kendo exponents comically hopping around the court desperately trying to avoid unfamiliar attacks to the shins, and the phenomenal extended reach in thrusts to the throat or even strikes to the *men*.

What is it about the *naginata* that makes it such a formidable and effective weapon? First and foremost, one of the main reasons for *naginata*'s success against the sword in the modern *budo* arts is the factor of surprise. It is fair to say that compared to the Kendo exponent, the Naginata exponent is required to make very few changes in fighting against Naginata or Kendo. All of the target areas are the same, and the fighting distance or *ma-ai* is easily altered. Kendo practitioners on the other hand are only used to making attacks to the upper-body (*men, kote, do, tsuki*) and are totally unfamiliar with the shins (*sune*) as a valid target. Normally, an attack to the lower-body would result in penalisation in Kendo, and so techniques for protecting the lower body are unheard of. Also, compared to Naginata practitioners, Kendo exponents are unaccustomed to expansive varieties in *ma-ai*. The *shinai* is gripped in one place, and is not slid forwards or backwards through the hands to alter distance as it is in Naginata (*kuridashi and kurikomi*). Thus, the Kendo exponent must overcome many unfamiliar movements to engage in a match against Naginata, whereas the Naginata exponent has little need to adapt their usual fighting method. To list the main differences and advantages of the *naginata* compared to a *shinai*:

1. The *naginata* is long and is thus advantageous from distant intervals.
2. The *naginata* utilises *kurikomi* and *kuridashi* movements where the length of the *naginata* can be continually adjusted to change the distance for engagement.
3. In Naginata, *kamae* and attacks can be executed from both the left and right sides. This makes it difficult for a Kendo practitioner to read the direction of the attack and thereby counter-attack appropriately.
4. Both ends of the *naginata* can be used to make strikes. For example, the bottom of the shaft (*ishizuki* end) can be used to strike *sune*. Until recently it was also permissible to execute a thrust to the throat (*tsuki*) with the *ishizuki*, but this has been outlawed in Naginata due to the dangerous nature of the technique.
5. As mentioned above, *sune* strikes to the inside and outside of the shins are common in Naginata, and can be executed from close in or far away.

The author (right) blocks sune while moving in to make an attack

However, assuming the Kendo practitioner has had experience fighting against Naginata, and the elements of surprise are minimalised, there are a number of techniques that can be effectively used against the *naginata*. When a Kendo-ka engages a Naginata-ka in a match, the norm is to assume a low *chudan-no-kamae* or *gedan-no-kamae* to guard against attacks to *sune*. This tends to leave the upper body open for *men* or *tsuki* attacks, but as long as the Kendo practitioner moves forwards rather than back, suitable pressure can be applied to the Naginata exponent. Although the *naginata* can be used from either close range or far away, if the Kendo-ka moves in closer, the Naginata attacks can be more successfully stifled. From extremely close-quarters, *hiki-waza* are usually very effective against Naginata, as are *kaeshi-waza* or *nuki-waza* when moving in.

Basically, once the element of surprise is removed, the match is usually decided by who is the better fighter. Both weapons have their advantages and disadvantages. Although relegated to an attraction rather than an officially contested event, *ishu-jiai* offer both Naginata and Kendo exponents a wealth of valuable experience and insights into crucial factors in both arts such as *ma-ai* (distancing), striking opportunities, *seme*, movement, *zanshin*, and so on.

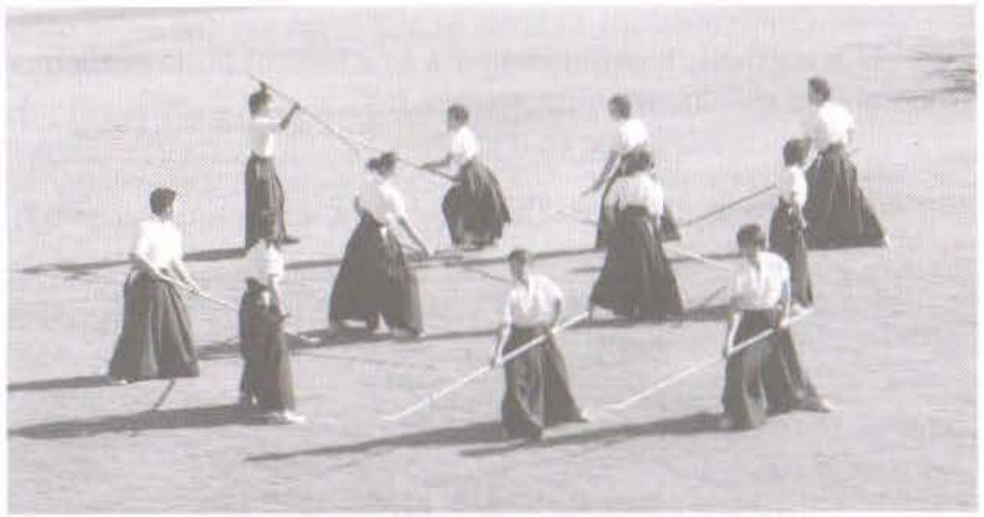
An ishu-jiai at the prestigious Kyoto Taikai (1989)

5. Rhythm Naginata

Although not so common, one more division of Naginata sometimes demonstrated at tournaments is 'Rhythm Naginata'. In this event, teams of Naginata practitioners complete a routine of Naginata techniques in time with music. Participants are encouraged to develop a unique routine in accordance with music and a theme of their choice. The result is a kind of dance routine using Naginata in choreographed movements. It is still fairly uncommon, and the only time you are likely to see it is at the World Championships, where it is staged as a public demonstration which is judged for a special prize by visiting VIPs. It has been performed on rare occasions at major tournaments in Japan, usually by student Naginata clubs.

There are no stipulated rules *per se*, and much is left up to the artistic ingenuity of the performers. At the World Championships, guidelines are given to each country for its performance which are as follows:

a) Each country may enter one team of two or more performers.
b) Performing time shall not exceed five minutes including entering and leaving.
c) The performance shall be to music of any kind.
d) The court size is 15 meters by 15 meters



Performance of Rhythm Naginata at the IBU

Budo traditionalists often scoff at Rhythm Naginata as being no more than a modern dance performance, and of little intrinsic value to the serious martial artist. This is not exactly true, as the practitioner gets the chance to apply various techniques in an array of different situations. For the performance to be successful, team work, breathing synchronicity, timing, distancing, and of course, sense of rhythm are of the essence. These are all attributes that are refined through preparation and performance of Rhythm Naginata. Another overlooked feature is that the practitioners are encouraged to use their initiative and imagination to create what is essentially their own *kata*. This can be very stimulating for practitioners who are used to constantly repeating the same *kata* in the course of their usual training.

It may come as a surprise to many that Rhythm Naginata is not actually that new. In fact, in Issue 970 of *Kyoiku jiron* (a journal dedicated to education) there is an interesting report about martial arts training in schools early last century. *"There I saw a dance by girls holding naginata. They swirled their naginata around while reciting poems (waka). Their poetry renditions left a lot to be desired, but the fact that they were using naginata while doing so made it an extremely interesting activity indeed."* (March 25, 1912)

I have never seen Rhythm Naginata performed to poetry, but the Belgian team's performance to the theme of the Pink Panther at the World Championships in Paris in 1999 was curious to say the least. In a nutshell, Rhythm Naginata as a kind of *budo* version of synchronised swimming!

The final pose—IBU Naginata Club

Part 3 - Grading Examinations and Qualifications

Grading examinations are an integral part of Naginata. They provide goals and yardsticks for the practitioners, and much-needed revenue for the federations. Naginata has grades ranging from 8th *kyu* through to 1st *kyu*, 1st *dan* through to 5th *dan*, and then the *shogo* titles of Renshi, Kyoshi and Hanshi. In Japan, examinations up to 4th *dan* are conducted by the respective local federations, and 5th *dan* and above are national examinations held once a year at the AJNF headquarters (currently in Itami city).

1. Dan Grades

The requirements for examinations are as follows:

1st dan *(Shodan)*	Candidates must be able to demonstrate a good command of the basic techniques and be able to engage in sparring
Basics	*Joge-buri*, *datotsu* (striking *men*, *sokumen*, *sune*, *do*)
Waza	Shikake-Oji up to *gohon-me* (number 5)
With *bogu*	Depends on federation
Shido-ho	Not necessary to demonstrate teaching beginners
Written test	Necessary
Age	13 and above
Prerequisite	Must have *ikkyu*

2nd dan *(Nidan)*	Candidates must be able to recognize valid striking opportunities and make powerful attacks
Basics	*Happo-buri*, *datotsu* (*men*, *sokumen*, *sune*, *do*, *kote*)

Waza	Shikake-Oji up to *hachihon*-me (number 8)
With *bogu*	*Uchikaeshi*, *kakari-geiko* (attack practise), *gokaku-geiko* (sparring)
Shido-ho	Not necessary to demonstrate teaching beginners
Written test	Necessary
Age	16 and above
Prerequisite	Must have had *shodan* for over 1 year

3rd dan *(Sandan)*	Candidates must have a firm command of all techniques, and be capable of instructing beginners.
Basics	*Happo-buri*, *datotsu* (all target areas)
Waza	Shikake-Oji up to *hachihon-me* (number 8)
With *bogu*	*Uchikaeshi*, *hikitate-geiko* (instructional sparring), *shiai*
Shido-ho	Necessary
Written test	Necessary
Age	19 and above
Prerequisite	Must have had *nidan* for over 2 years

4th dan *(Yondan)*	Candidates must be able to execute all techniques at a high level, and be capable of refereeing matches.
Basics	*Happo-buri*, *datotsu* (all target areas)
Waza	Shikake-Oji up to *hachihon-me* (number 8) Naginata Federation Kata up to *gohon-me* (number 5)
With *bogu*	*Uchikaeshi*, *hikitate-geiko* (instructional sparring), *shiai*, refereeing
Shido-ho	Necessary
Written test	Necessary
Age	22 and above
Prerequisite	Must have had *sandan* for over 3 years

5th dan *(Godan)*	Candidates must have a solid understanding of the principles of Naginata, and be of good character
Basics	*Happo-buri*, *datotsu* (all target areas)
Waza	Shikake-Oji up to *hachihon-me* Naginata Federation Kata up to *nanahon-me* (number 7)
With *bogu*	*Uchikaeshi*, *hikitate-geiko* (instructional sparring), *shiai*, refereeing
Shido-ho	Necessary
Written test	Necessary
Age	25 and above
Prerequisite	Must have had *yondan* for over 3 years

2. Shogo

Shogo are titles awarded after *godan*. Whereas the focus of *dan* grades is mainly upon the level of technical mastery attained by the practitioner, *shogo* are awarded according to technical mastery, understanding of the deeper philosophical principles of Naginata, personal character and attributes, and also contributions made to promote the art.

Prerequisites:
Renshi: Must be 28 years and above and have held *godan* for 3 or more years.
Kyoshi: Must be 35 years and above and have held *Renshi* for 7 or more years.
Hanshi: Must be 55 years and above and have held *Kyoshi* for 20 or more years.

Each candidate is recommended by their federation, and they are subjected to rigorous testing to ascertain whether they are good enough to be awarded the title. Needless to say, *Hanshi*, being the highest rank in Naginata, is the most difficult to pass. There are examples of people who have been awarded *Hanshi*

posthumously, or as a gesture of gratitude for services rendered on behalf of Naginata even though the recipient may not actually be a practitioner.

(See Appendix 3 for list of possible examination questions for 1st *dan* through to 5th *dan*).

3. Referee Qualifications

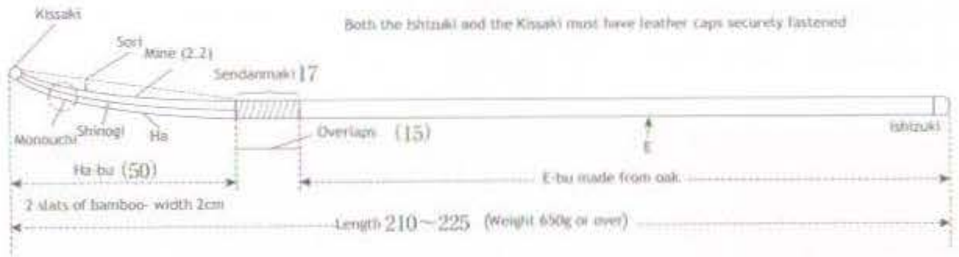
Official Referees are divided into the three classifications of Type-1 (*Ishu*), Type-2 (*Nishu*), and Type-3 (*Sanshu*). Type-1 Referees must hold the title of All Japan Naginata Federation *Renshi* or above, and be deemed to "possess a suitable level of technical competence." Type 2 Referees must hold the grade of 5th *dan* or above, and Type 3 Referees must be 3rd *dan* or above. Applicants for the examinations for Official Referee authorisation must be registered members of the All Japan Naginata Federation (or the International Naginata Federation).

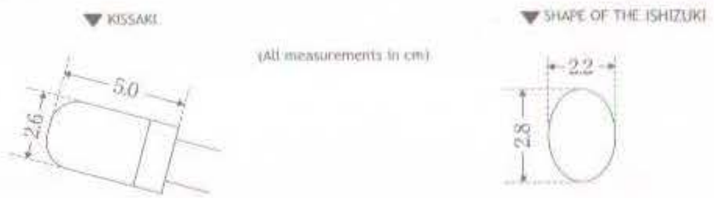
The All Japan Naginata Federation will only recognise Type 1-3 Referees if they have been recommended by their organisation of membership, have completed the necessary total hours of seminar time, and have passed the final assessment examination. In principle, all referees at competitions held by the All Japan Naginata Federation and affiliated organisations must be officially authorised referees, and wear their official badges to prove their status. For more information about the role of *Shinpan* and the technicalities of refereeing please refer to Appendices 1-3 at the back of this volume.

Official referee's patch

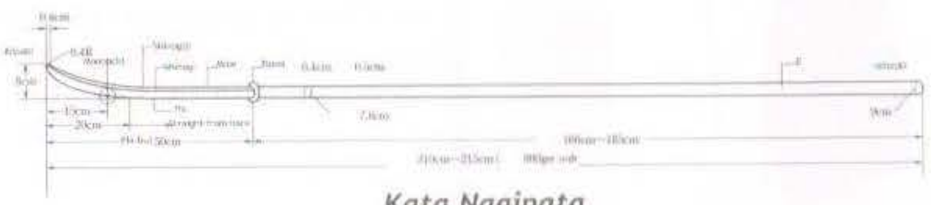
Part 4 - The Equipment

1. The Naginata

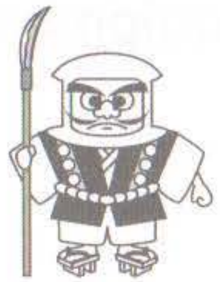




1. Total length 2.10m-2.25m.
2. Weight 650g+.
3. The blade (*ha-bu*) consists of 2 slats of bamboo (2cm x 50cm) placed together. There is a hole at the tip (*kissaki*) where a leather cap is tied into place with a nylon thread (*tsuru*), and secured with tape.
4. The *monouchi's* are situated 15-20cm from the *kissaki*, and 20-25cm from the *ishizuki*.
5. The joint of the shaft (*e-bu*) and the blade (*ha-bu*) is 15cm and is secured by winding white plastic tape to form what is called the *sendan-maki*.
6. The shaft is made from white oak, and is oval, being slightly fatter at the *ishizuki* end. A leather cap is attached to the *ishizuki*.



Kata Naginata



Benkei's Pointers

Always check your equipment before training.
1. Make sure that the leather caps on the *kissaki* and the *ishizuki* have not loosened.
2. Check that the bamboo blade is not splintered.
3. Check that the shaft is not bent.
4. Make sure that you name is clearly marked near the *ishizuki* end. All *naginata* may not be the same, but they sure look the same!

2. Carrying, Passing and Receiving

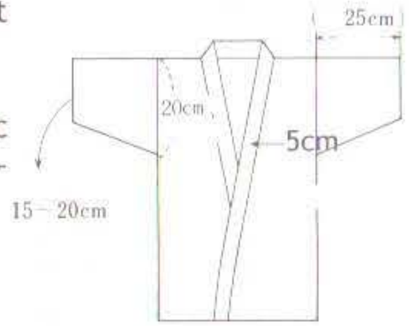
When receiving or handing over a *naginata*, hold the centre of the shaft with the blade at the top and the *ishizuki* at the bottom. Pass the *naginata* with the blade facing toward you and on a slight angle to the right. The receiver takes the *naginata* with the left hand in the centre of the passer's hands, with the right hand closest to the *ishizuki*.

3. Training Wear

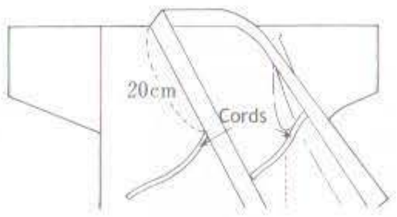
Naginata training wear consists of the *keiko-gi* (jacket), *obi* (sash), and *hakama* (split-skirt). It is also permissible to wear a normal tracksuit. It is important that your training wear is the correct size so as not to impair movement, and it must be clean. The state of your training wear is said to reflect and affect your attitude to training.

a. Keiko-gi

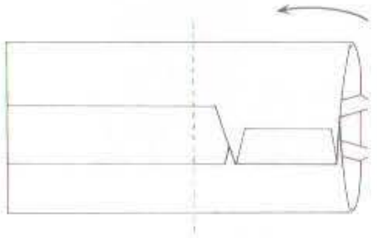
Length
Should be longer than the slits at the sides of the *hakama*.



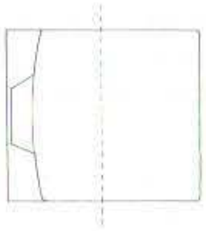
Sleeves
Should be about 15-20cm. Elastic may be inserted to prevent the *naginata* from entering the sleeve.
Arm length
Should reach the elbow.
Collar
The width of the collar should be approximately 5cm.
Cords
These are necessary to prevent the *keiko-gi* from opening. They should be fastened to allow tying from under the collar with the left lapel coming over the right. (See diagram).



Wearing the keiko-gi
Make sure that the cords are tightly fastened, that the collar is straight, and there are no wrinkles in the back.



Folding the keiko-gi
Note that the *keiko-gi* should be made of white cotton. Cotton is preferable over synthetic materials for its sweat absorbing qualities.



b. *Obi* (sash)

The *obi* should be made from the same material as the *keiko-gi*, and is 30cm in width. This is then folded to make the width 10cm. The *obi* should be long enough to wrap around your waist twice and then tied in a bow at the back. When folding the *obi*, remove any wrinkles, and fold it over eight times keeping it neat.

c. *Hakama*

The *hakama* is a split-skirt which can be made from navy blue or black cotton or synthetic material.

Putting the Hakama on

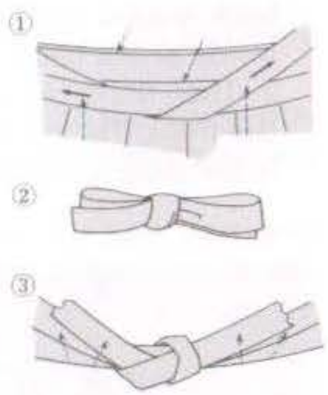
The *hakama* should be worn at waist height with the *koshi-ita* (back-board) fitting snugly into the small of the back.

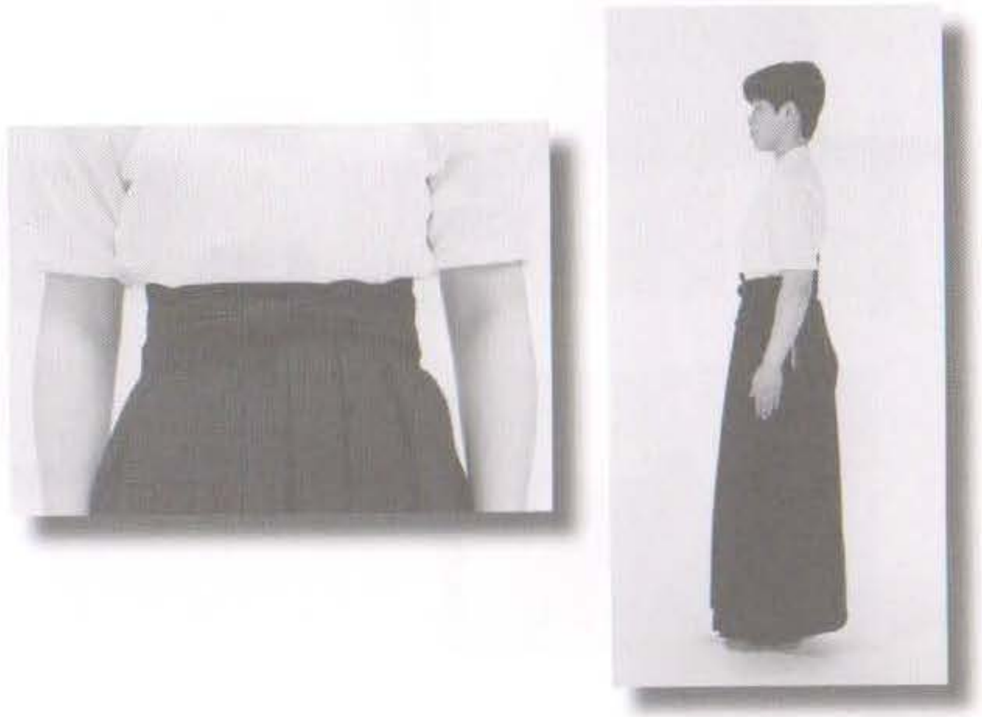
Method 1

1. Taking the top-front of the *hakama*, step into it left foot first. Bring it up just above the *obi*.
2. Pass the two *mae-himo* around the back, cross right over left, and bring them round to cross over again at the front (1).
3. Twist the *mae-himo* held in the left hand upward as in (1),

and pass once again around the back. Tie in a bow at the back.

4. Take hold of the *koshi-ita* and insert the spatula from above into the *mae-himo* at the back. Bring the *ushiro-himo* (back straps) around to cross over at the front. The right *himo* should be on top as you thread the left *himo* underneath all the other straps. Then tie in a knot at the front, tucking the remainder into each side of the *hakama* (3).

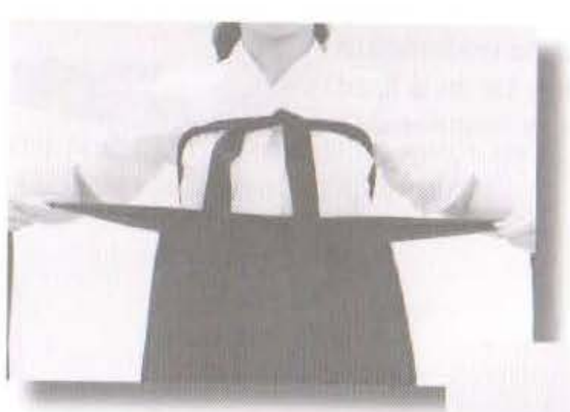


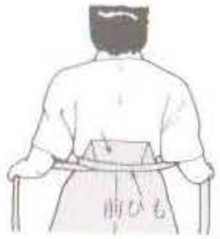


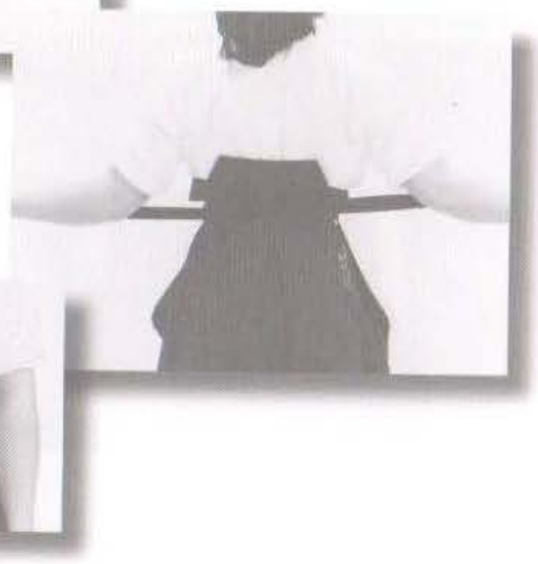
Method 2

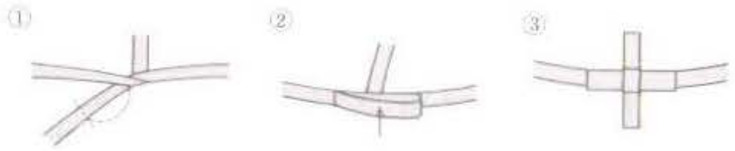
1. Taking the top-front of the *hakama*, step into it left foot first. Then, placing the *koshi-ita* spatula into the knot of the *obi*, bring the *ushiro-himo* around to the front and secure temporarily.
2. Take the *mae-himo*, wrap them around to the back and cross them over on the *koshi-ita* seam. Bring the *himo* to the front again, cross them over 2cm from the top, and then take them

back around and into the slits at the side of the *hakama* to tie inside at the back, just under the *obi* knot.
3. Then untie the *ushiro-himo* which were temporarily tied at the front. Tie in a knot in the front and make a cross as shown in the diagrams below.



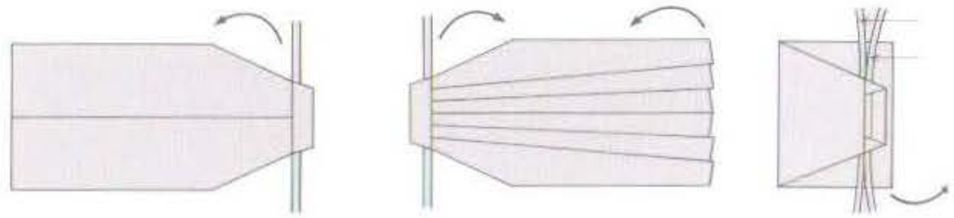


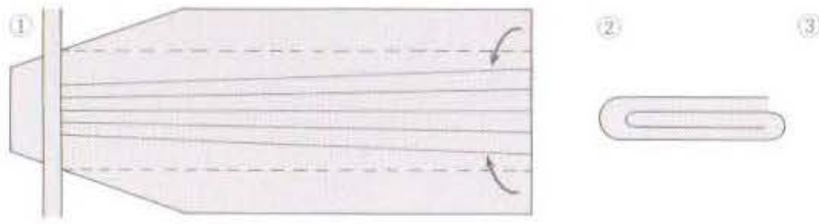


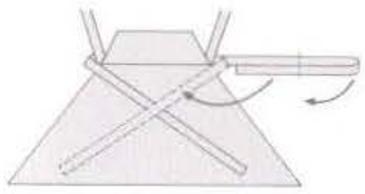


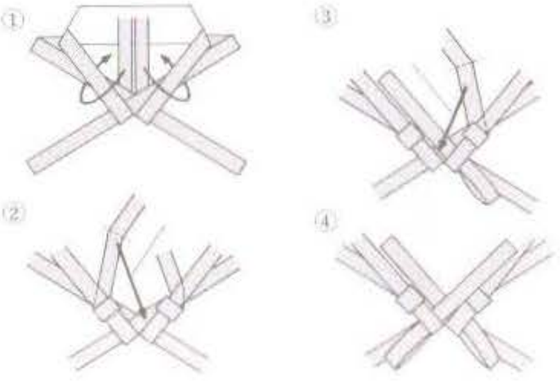
Folding the hakama

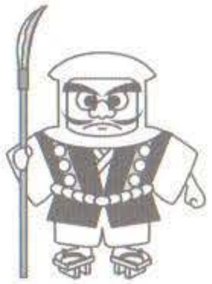
1. Place your hand inside the *hakama* from the side and move the crotch seam to the right.
2. Lay the *hakama* face down on the floor with the rear centre seam aligned on top of the front centre seam. Smooth out any creases and align the hems.
3. Turn the *hakama* over, taking care that the back part does not become disarranged. Pressing down on the hem while flipping the *hakama* over should keep the back neat. Arrange the three left pleats and the two right pleats.
4. Fold both sides inward approximately 10cm.
5. Fold the length of the *hakama* into three. Fold the *mae-himo* (long straps) into quarters and cross over. Fold the *ushiro-himo* shown in the diagram below.











Benkei's Pointers

Hakama are loose trousers tied at the waist with a cord and worn over a *kimono* as part of formal or ceremonial Japanese-style dress. Men's *hakama* underwent a variety of changes over time: The legs were widened, pleats were added at the waist, and they were bound at the ankles with a cord threaded through the hem. The type of *hakama* used in Naginata came into vogue during the late seventeenth century, and was designed to enable horse riding.

The five pleats in the *hakama* represent the five Confucian virtues. These can be interpreted in a number of ways such as the relationship between lord and retainer, parent and child, husband and wife, young and old, and friends.

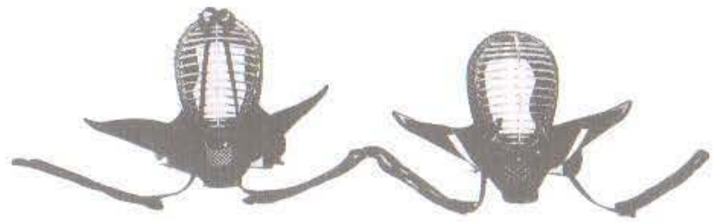
Jin: Benevolence
Gi: Honour or justice
Rei: Courtesy and etiquette
Chi: Wisdom, intelligence
Shin: Sincerity

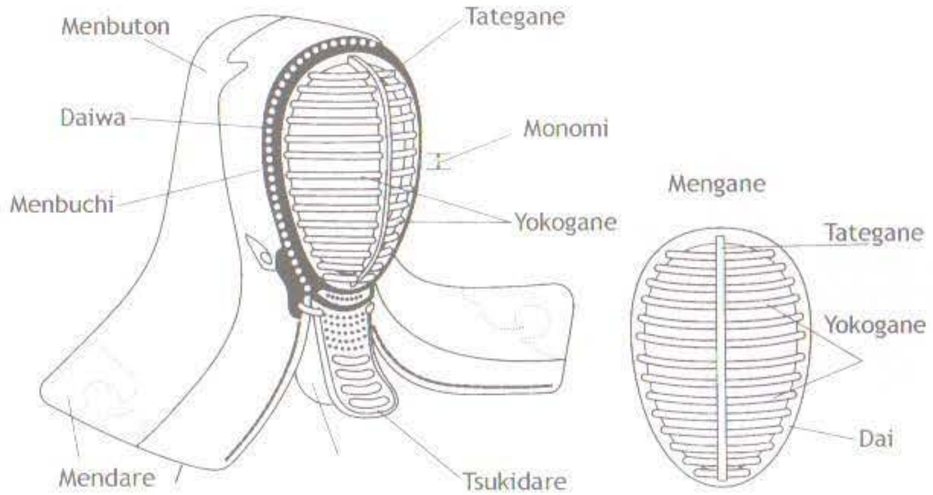
This symbolism should be kept in mind while folding and keeping the pleats pronounced and neat. Also, the one line in the back of the *hakama* represents the ideal of being single in resolve and sincerity, not to be in two minds.

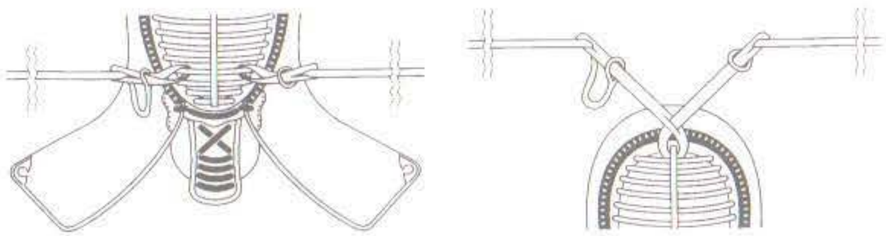
4. Bogu

The armour used in Naginata is called *bogu*. It is designed to protect all the designated target areas (*datotsu-bui*), without impeding movement in any way. It is important to choose *bogu* which is the right size for you. Also, make sure that you keep it in good order and mend or replace bits which show signs of disintegration.

Men
The *men-himo* (cords) are attached to leather straps which are again attached to the fourth or fifth bar from the bottom of the *men-gane* (face-grill). It is also possible to attach the *men* cords to the top of the *men*. Note that the *men-dare* (shoulder protectors) should not be too long.

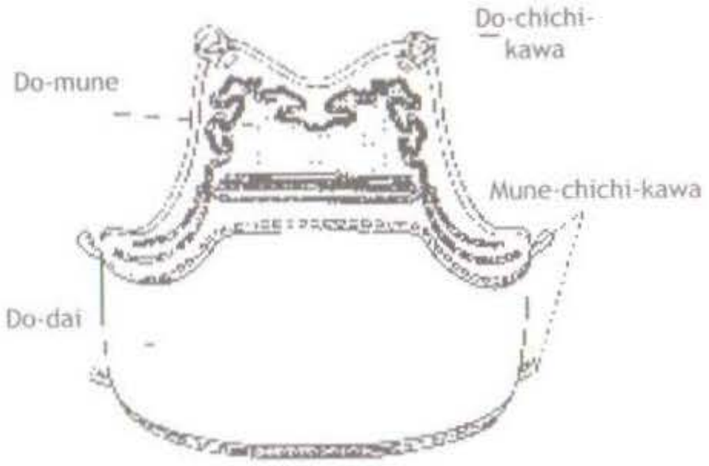






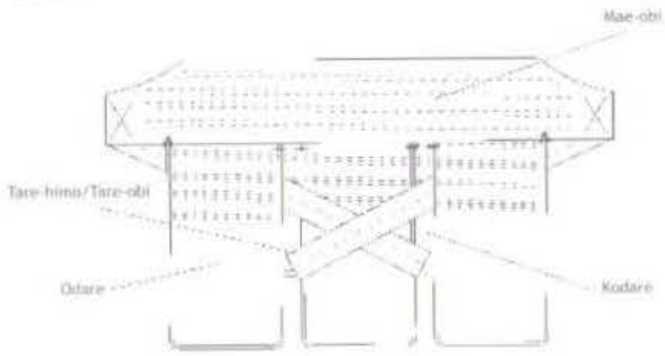
Do

The *do* can be made from bamboo and lacquer or from fibreglass. The trimmings are usually made from leather. It is important to use a *do* which is suited to your body size.



Tare

The *tare* has three large protective flaps in the front. The middle flap is where the *zekken* or name pouch is attached. The tare straps are usually 6-7cm in width.



Kote

The *kote* are designed with a split finger and thumb in order to allow *mochikae*. Thus, it is preferable to use these special Naginata *kote* rather than the type of *kote* used in Kendo.

Sune-ate

The *sune-ate* have 5-7 black bamboo slats 2cm in width attached to protect the shins. Some *sune-ate* also come equipped with knee and ankle protectors. The cords should be long enough to wrap around twice.

Endnotes

[1] Oya Minoru "Central Issues in the Instruction of Kendo: With Focus on the Inter-connectedness of *Waza* and Mind", in A. Bennett (ed). *Budo Perspectives*, KW Publications, 2005. pp. 203-19.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 204.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[6] All Japan Kendo Federation *Japanese-English Dictionary of Kendo*, AJKF, 2000.
[7] Takano Sasaburo, *Kendo*, Heirinkan, 1918. pp. 190-92.
[8] Oya, Op. Cit., p. 216.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[10] Kinoshita Hisanori, *Kenpo shigoku shoden*. Taiiku to Supotsu Shuppansha, 1985. pp. 154-55.

[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Nakabayashi Shinji, *Budo no susume*. Nakabayashi Shinji Sensei Isakushu Kankokai, 1987. pp. 162-67.

Chapter 3:

Practical Lessons

Without a Partner

Part 1- Shizentai & Rei

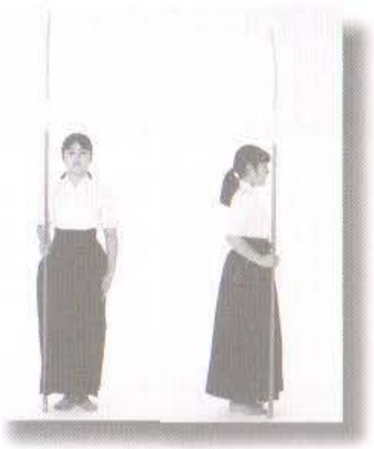
Before learning techniques, it is important to learn correct etiquette for training in Naginata. At all times correct posture must be maintained and appropriate courtesies observed while in the *dojo*. It is hoped that by emphasising such attributes during the course of training, the practitioner will gradually come to embody them and act in a courteous manner to others outside of the *dojo* as well. That is why correct form and courtesy are considered a central components to training in the art, not only as a sporting activity, but also as a means for character development.

1- Shizentai

Standing and holding the *naginata* upright is referred to as '*shizentai*', or natural standing position. This is meant to be a comfortable and stable stance from which you bow to your training partner at the beginning and end of completing a set or sequence of techniques or after a match.

(1) Stand the *naginata* up straight with the *ishizuki* placed to the diagonal front of the right foot.
(2) The blade should be facing forward and the right wrist should be lightly touching the hip with the left hand hanging down the left thigh with fingers closed.
(3) Keep your back straight, shoulders relaxed, and chin in.
(4) Look straight ahead, or into the eyes of your partner.

Front view



Side view

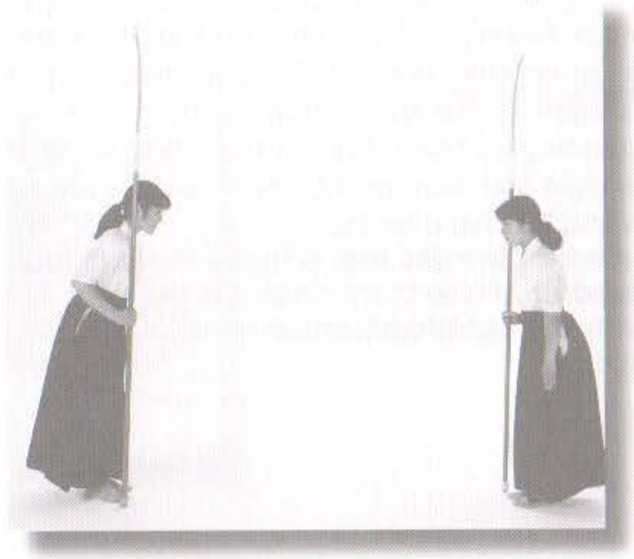
2- Rei

Rei (courtesy, etiquette) is one of the most important concepts found in Naginata. As with other *budo* arts, Naginata is said to begin and end with '*rei*.' Simply put, *rei* refers to the feeling of respect and gratitude one has towards training partners, other members of the *dojo*, and the training environment itself. Such feelings are expressed physically through ritualistic bowing, both from a seated position (*zarei*), and standing (*ritsurei*).

It is important to conduct the bow correctly, but also to consciously express your respect with the right frame of mind and with sincerity, rather than merely going through the motions. Regardless of how technically skilled the practitioner may be, or how successful they are in competition, if they are arrogant, slovenly, rude, inconsiderate, or ungrateful to training partners or opponents, and to other people in general, they are said to have deviated from what is held as the Naginata ideal. The importance of strict observance of *rei* in both its physical expressions and philosophical ideal cannot be overstressed.

a. *Ritsurei* (the standing bow)

Ritsurei is performed from *shizentai* in two situations; to the *shomen* before and after a match or practise, and also to your partner or opponent. When performing *ritsurei* to the *shomen*, bend the upper body 30 degrees from the waist. When performing



ritsurei to your partner, bend the upper body 15 degrees from the waist. In either case the *naginata* should not move at all, although the left hand should slide down the left thigh as the bow is performed. When bowing to a training partner, it should be done in unison, and eye-contact must be maintained at all times. Note that the bow in the picture to the right is deeper than the one on the previous page. This is a bow to the *shomen*.

b. *Zarei* (the seated bow)

(1) When sitting down into *seiza* (formal seated position), draw the left foot back slightly and kneel down on the left knee. Then draw the right leg back and kneel on both knees.
(2) Cross the tips of the big toes, bring the knees together (one fist apart for men), and keep the back straight.
(3) Posture should be upright, chin pulled in with the mouth lightly closed, and the gaze should be straight ahead.
(4) Both hands should be placed on the upper thighs with the fingers together.
(5) The *naginata* is placed parallel to your right side with the *ishizuki* 30cm in front of the knee. The blade is pointing behind and facing out.
(6) To perform *zarei*, keeping your back straight, bend forward from the hips and place both hands on the floor simultaneously with the index fingers and thumbs touching to form a triangle. Stay in the prostrated position for approximately one breath, then rise up again to the kneeling position.
(7) When standing up from this position, first stand the toes up, pivot to the right and pick up the *naginata* with the right hand on the bottom and left hand on top.
(8) Step out with the right foot bringing the left foot up next to it as you stand up. Place the *ishizuki* on the floor, hold onto the *naginata* with the right hand and drop the left hand down onto the left thigh.

Whether sitting or standing you must always try to maintain a straight but relaxed posture. The picture to the right is a good example of *seiza*. This formal seated position is utilised when lining up to start or finish a training session, and when sitting and watching demonstrations by other practitioners. If possible, refrain from sitting cross-legged or sprawled out on the floor. The *dojo* is a formal area, and efforts must be made not to look untidy. Notice also that the *naginata* is placed neatly to the side with the blade facing outwards at the back. All equipment should be placed neatly when not in use.

The photo to the right is a good example of *zarei*. The back is straight and the neck is not showing. The hands should form a neat triangle with the fingers not splayed out. The hands should slide to the floor and back up in unison.

This is a bad example of *zarei*. Note that the neck is showing, and the back is not straight.

Part 2- The Five Kamae (Stances)

The *kamae* (fighting stances) have the two functions of defence and offence. The five basic *kamae* in Naginata are *chudan*, *gedan*, *hasso*, *waki*, and *jodan*. All the *kamae* have left and right variations, but it is considered standard practise to start with the left side.

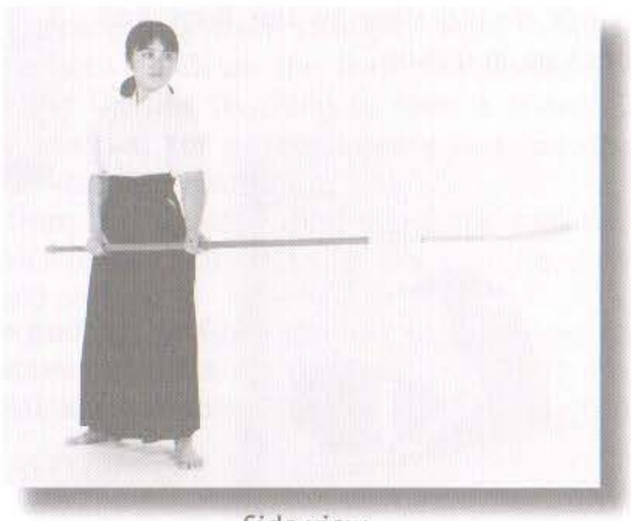
1- Chudan-no-kamae

Chudan-no-kamae is considered the base of all the different *kamae*. This *kamae* is the most suitable for adapting to any situation.

a. From *shizentai* into *hidari-chudan* (left foot forward)

(1) From *shizentai*, place your left hand on top of your right hand.
(2) Step out with your left foot to a distance approximately equal to shoulder width. The body should turn to face the right to take an oblique stance against your partner.
(3) The *kissaki* should fall forwards as your right hand slides towards the *ishizuki* end of the shaft and ends up resting on the right thigh. The distance from the back hand to the *ishizuki* should be the same length as the forearm.

Front view



Side view

b. From *shizentai* into *migi-chudan* (right foot forward)

Bring the left hand under the right, and then step out with the right foot while moving the left hand down towards the *ishizuki*.

Correct grip

Incorrect grip

Feet are approximately shoulder-width apart

2- Gedan-no-kamae

Gedan is considered a defensive stance in which you are able to protect yourself while also applying pressure (*seme*) to your opponent's lower body. Like all the *kamae* used in Naginata, *gedan* can be used on both sides. However, the following explanation is for the standard posture with the left foot forward.

(1) From *chudan* twist the right hand outwards and turn the blade so that it faces up.
(2) The right hand should be positioned by the right ear, and the elbow should open naturally.
(3) The left hand should slide slightly towards the *kissaki*.
(4) The *kissaki* should be in line with the centre of the body approximately 10cm off the floor.
(5) The left elbow should lightly make contact with the body.

Correct grip for front hand

Incorrect grip

3- Hasso-no-kamae

Hasso is considered one of the most aggressive *kamae* in which attacks can be made instantly. *Hasso* from both the left and right sides is used frequently. However, the following explanation is for *hasso* with the left foot forward.

(1) From *chudan*, lift the *kissaki* up and swap the left hand over with the right kept at the centre of the body.
(2) The right hand should be in line with the right ear, while the left hand slides down towards the *ishizuki* and rests on the hip. The elbow should not be protruding.
(3) The *e-bu* should come across the chest and the *ishizuki* should remain on the body's centre-line. The blade (*ha-bu*) is facing forwards.

Front

Side

4- Wakigamae

Wakigamae is a stance enabling versatility in attack depending on the opponent's movements. The act of hiding the *naginata* from view serves to offer an element of surprise as the opponent will be unable to gage the distance for attack easily. However, as the body is virtually left open, it is not advisable to utilise this stance too often during the course of a match. Both left and right sides are possible.

(1) From *chudan*, lift the *kissaki* over and back as you *mochikae* (swap grip) at the centre of the body.
(2) The *ishizuki* should be in the front guarding the centre-line, the blade should be facing outwards, and the naginata should be level.
(3) The distance between the hands should be the same as the distance between the feet (shoulder-width apart). Both arms should hang down naturally and be relaxed.

Front

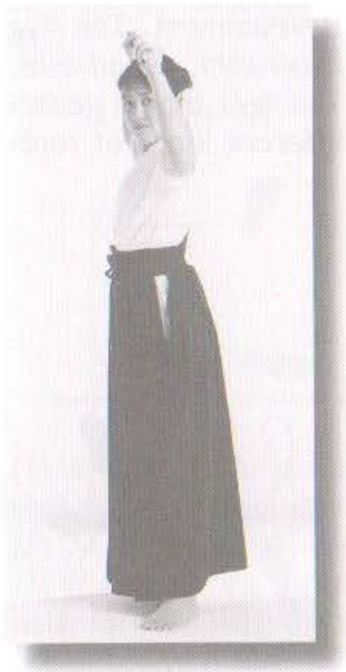
Side

Note the space between the hands

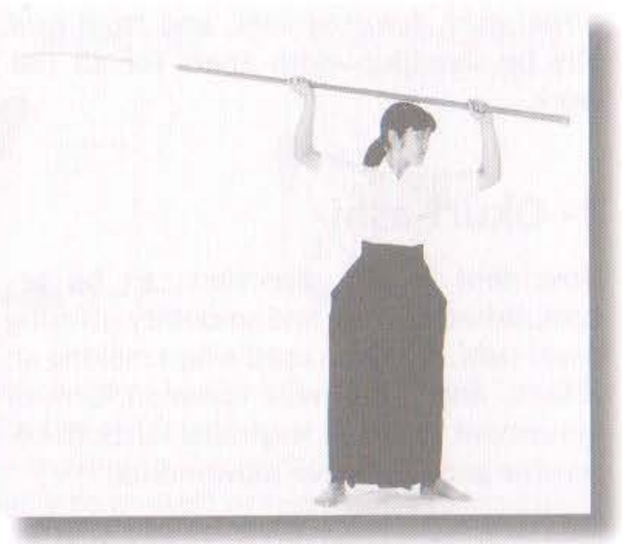
5- Jodan-no-kamae

Jodan is the stance where the *naginata* is positioned overhead, and is considered the most offensive *kamae*, allowing immediate attack, but little opportunity for defence. Due to the aggressive nature of this stance, it is difficult for the opponent to move in to make an attack. However, as the whole lower body is left open, a slip in concentration will quickly result in defeat. To utilise this stance effectively requires an advanced level of skill. This *kamae* can also be utilised from both sides.

(1) From *chudan*, *mochikae* in the centre of the body and lift the *kissaki* overhead.
(2) The *ishizuki* should be at the front protecting the body's centre-line, and the blade *(ha-bu)* should be facing up.
(3) The *kissaki* at the rear should be slightly higher than the *ishizuki* at the front, leaving the length of the *naginata* on a slight angle.
(4) The arms are spaced evenly apart, and the front arm should not obstruct the view in any way.



Front



Side

Part 3- Tai-sabaki (Footwork)

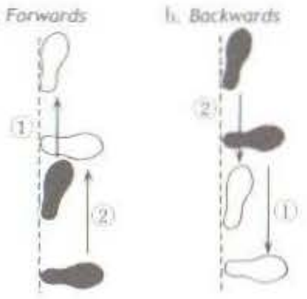
Tai-sabaki refers to the footwork which is used when moving for defence or offence. However, this does not just mean moving with the feet only. You should try to grasp the concept of moving in all directions from the hips, as this will make movement swifter and more stable. Also, the power for striking comes from the hips.

There is an old saying *"don't strike with the hands, strike with the legs. Don't strike with the legs, strike with the hips. Don't strike with the hips strike with the heart."* Obviously this is referring to the ultimate objective in Naginata, or any other martial art for that matter. However, the important thing to remember here is that you should strive to concentrate your centre of balance, power, and movement in your hips.

When practicing movement in Naginata, aim to move silently, swiftly, and strongly, without any forced or extraneous movements. In order to be able to move in this way without having to think about it requires much practise, and so all beginners (and advanced exponents) must be drilled thoroughly in *tai-sabaki*, as this will form the base of their Naginata development. The five kinds of footwork utilised in Naginata are *okuri-ashi*, *ayumi-ashi*, *hiraki-ashi*, *fumikae-ashi*, and *tsugi-ashi*. The feet should generally be shoulder-width apart for all the different kinds of footwork.

1- Okuri-ashi

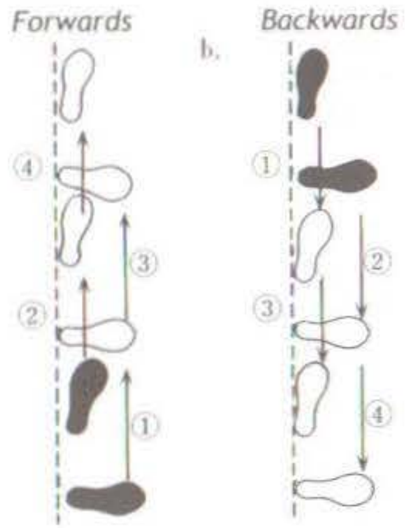
Movement in any direction can be accomplished quickly and smoothly utilising *okuri-ashi*. It is also used when making an attack, and is the most common form of movement found in Naginata for both offensive and defensive movements.



(1) When advancing, move from the front foot followed by the rear foot (see a).
(2) When retreating, move from the rear foot followed by the front foot (see b).

2- Ayumi-ashi

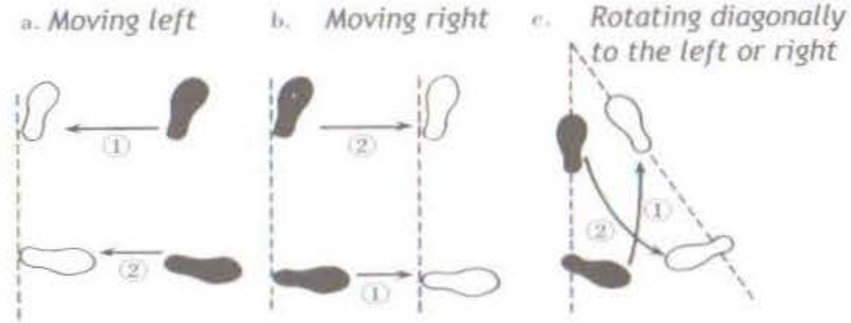
Ayumi-ashi is moving the left and right feet alternately just as in normal walking. It is useful for covering large distances quickly in attack and defence.



(1) Alternate the feet as you would when walking while maintaining a balanced posture.
(2) When advancing, draw the back foot up first (see a), and move from the front foot when retreating (see b).

3- Hiraki-ashi

Hiraki-ashi is used for attacking the opponent from the diagonal or sideways, and when trying to dodge an attack. It is important to maintain balance and a straight posture when utilising *hiraki-ashi*.



(1) When using *hiraki-ashi* to move to the left, move from the left foot first followed up with the right (see a).
(2) Do the opposite when moving to the right (see b).
(3) When rotating diagonally to the left or right (see c) step diagonally forward with the back foot and pivot the body around to face the opposite direction.

4- Fumikae-ashi

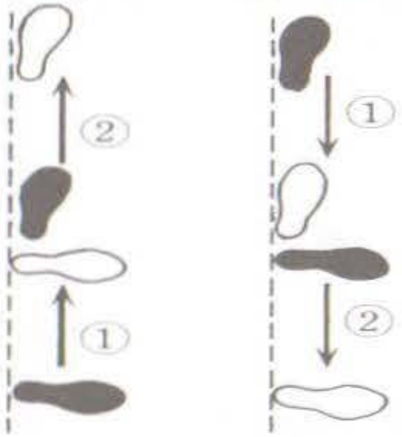
This method footwork is used for changing the direction the body is facing on the spot during attack or defence.

(1) Bring the back foot up even with the front foot and then immediately pull the front foot back to the rear. The opposite is also useful for dodging the opponent's attacks to the lower body.

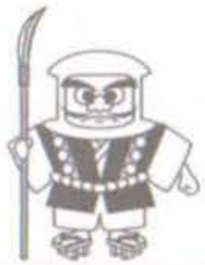
5- Tsugi-ashi

Tsugi-ashi is mainly used when striking from a long distance. The back foot is pulled in close to the front foot, then the front foot immediately takes a big step forward. It can be used for advancing or retreating.

a. *Forwards.* b. *Backwards.*



(1) When advancing, draw your back foot up to your front foot, then immediately step out from the front foot.
(2) When retreating, bring the front foot back even with the rear foot, then immediately take a large step back from the rear foot.



Benkei's Pointers

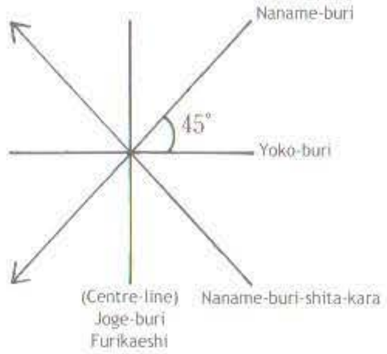
When instructing groups, get the students to assume *chudan* first by giving the command "*chudan ni kamae.*" At the command of "*mae*" (advance) everybody should take one step forward with *okuri-ashi*. To retreat say "*ato*". Take the students through all the different types of footwork by giving commands such as "*ayumi-ashi mae*" (advance with *ayumi-ashi*), "*ayumi-ashi ato*" (retreat with *ayumi-ashi*), "*hidari ni hirake*" (*hiraki-ashi* to the left), "*migi ni hirake*" (*hiraki-ashi* to the right) and so on. Also, practise moving in the various *kamae*. Another method of practising *tai-sabaki* is for the instructor to move in a certain way and have the students follow. For example, if the instructor was to move back with *ayumi-ashi* the students would be required to follow and move forward with *ayumi-ashi*.

Another effective way to practice *tai-sabaki* is in pairs. Assume *ai-chudan*—when two people assume the *chudan* stance against each other. From there, one person takes the lead and moves in various directions utilising the various types of footwork, while the other follows as closely as possible making sure that they always maintain the correct distance (*ma-ai*) with *monouchi* to *monouchi*. Eye-contact must always be maintained. This way, both students get used to moving in sync with their opponent while always keeping the correct striking distance.

Drills for *tai-sabaki* are usually conducted at the beginning of the training session. The importance of learning correct movement cannot be overstated, and much time should be dedicated to giving students a firm grounding in this.

Part 4- Happo-buri (Practice Swings)

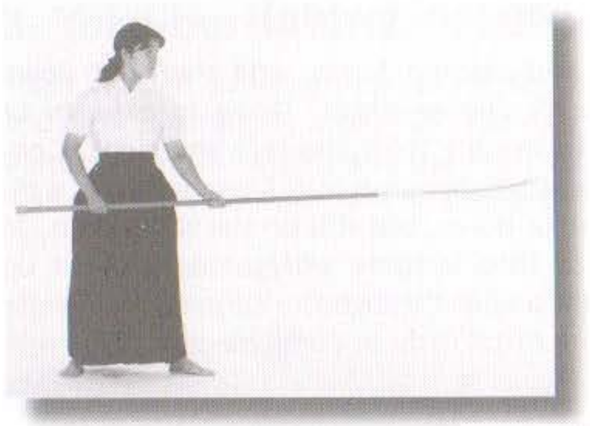
Happo-buri is the act of swinging the *naginata* up and down vertically, diagonally, and horizontally. The point of *happo-buri* is to learn the direction for proper blade movement, basic body movements and footwork for striking, correct grip, and to get used to handling the *naginata*. It is beneficial to practise *happo-buri* at the beginning of a training session as a warm-up exercise and at the end as a cool-down exercise. *Happo-buri* is the first thing a beginner is taught, and is an essential part of training for everyone regardless of level. *Joge-buri*, *naname-buri*, *yoko-buri*, *naname-buri-shita-kara*, and *furikaeshi* are performed several times each in this order.



1- Joge-buri (Vertical Swing)

Starting from *chudan*, swing the *naginata* up and down in a vertical line down the centreline of the body.

(1) From *chudan* bring your back foot up as you lift the *naginata* overhead facing the hips to the front. (Photo 2).
(2) Then pull that foot back as while bringing the *naginata* down in a large straight arc, turning the body to the side once again. Keep a relaxed but firm grip on the *naginata* without opening the hands up. (Photo 3).
(3) This up-down motion is repeated many times. The grip can be changed overhead and the opposite foot pulled back so that the swing comes down on the opposite side. As with all techniques in Naginata, it is preferable to be proficient on both the left and right sides.



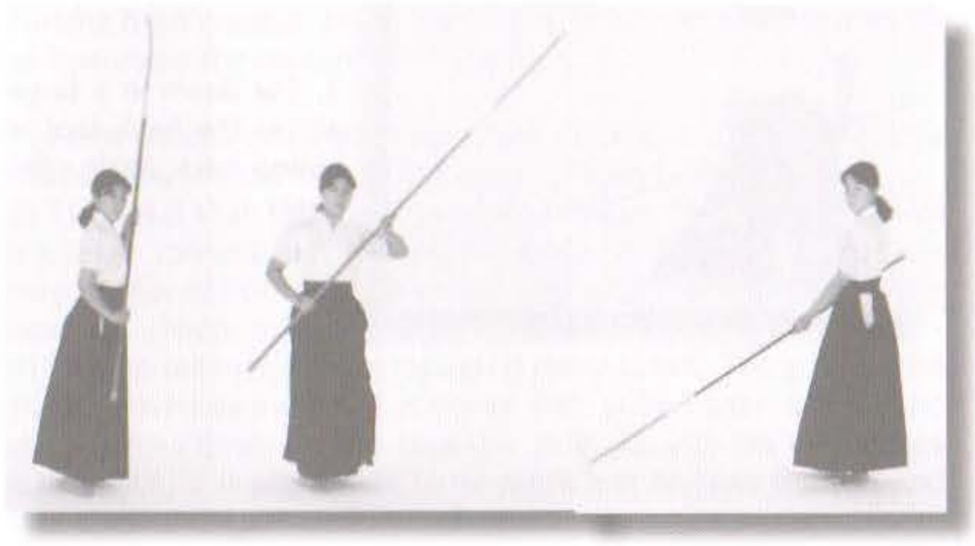
1. From *chudan*.

2. Lift the *naginata* overhead as the back foot is drawn up even with the front foot.

3. Cut down in a large arc as the back foot is pulled back again. Repeat.

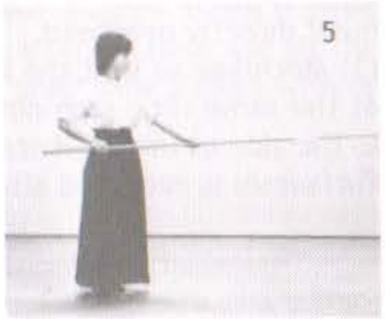
2- Naname-buri (Diagonal Swing)

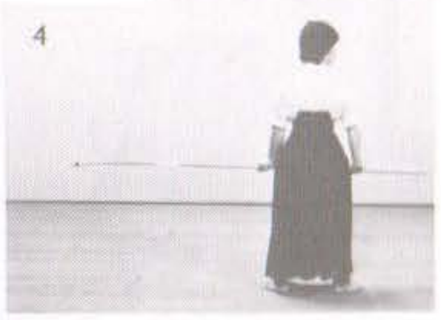
From *chudan*, *mochikae* and assume *hasso*, and then cut down through the centre on a 45 degree angle. Using *hiraki-ashi* or *fumikae-ashi* cut down alternately from the left and right. Conversely, *naname-buri-shita-kara* (*naname-buri* from below) is a diagonal cut going up instead of down, but still on the same path. To execute *naname-buri-shita-kara*, assume *wakigamae* and cut up alternately on left and right angles through the centre on an angle of 45 degrees, also utilising *hiraki-ashi* or *fumikae-ashi*.



3- Yoko-buri (Horizontal Swing)

From *chudan* assume *wakigamae* and swing around to the left and right alternately using *fumikae-ashi* or *hiraki-ashi*. The swing should be at *do* height, and the *naginata* should be level with the blade facing sideways. Left and right swings should be exactly the same.

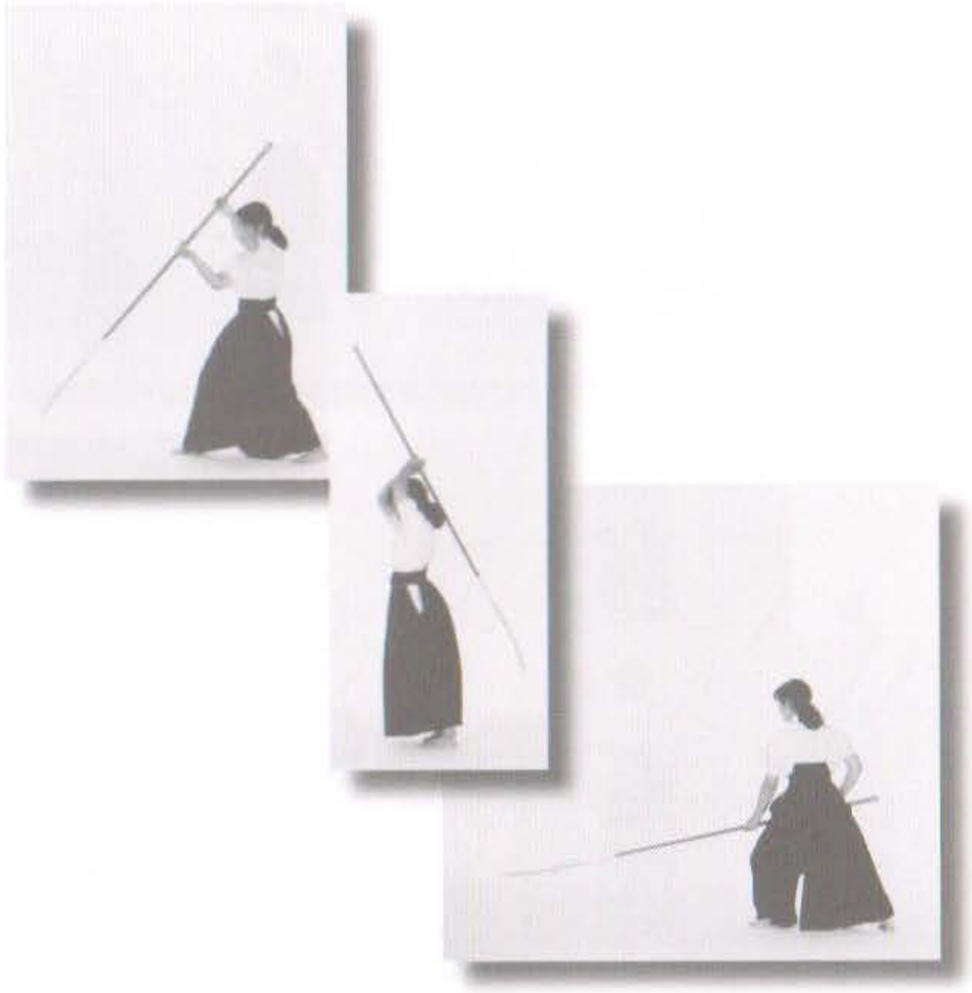




4- Furikaeshi (Windmill Swing)

This swing is very characteristic of Naginata in that it is large and circular.

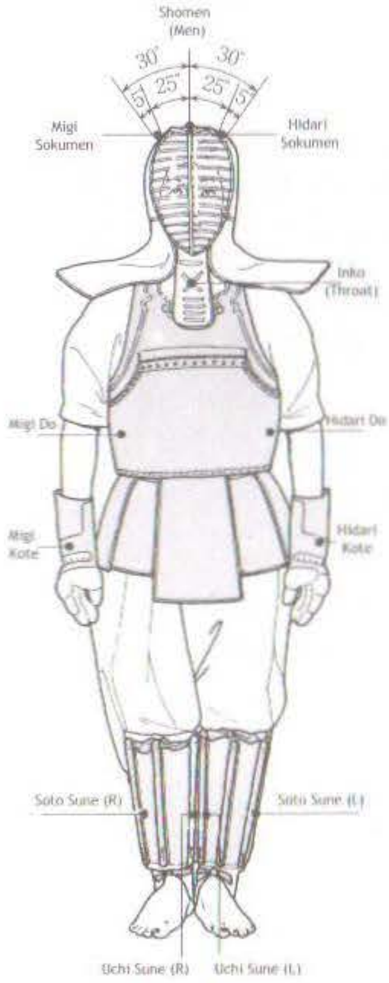
(1) From *chudan*, draw the front foot back and face the hips to the front.
(2) Drop the *kissaki* down the side and back. Bring both hands to meet directly overhead.
(3) *Mochikae* so that the left hand goes toward the *ishizuki* end. At the same time step out with the right foot, and turn the hips to the side as the *naginata* is brought down in a large straight arc. *Furikaeshi* is executed alternately on the left and right sides.



Part 5- Practice Strikes (-uchi)

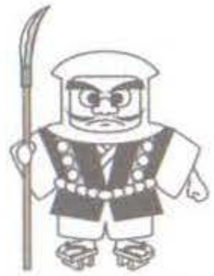
When making an attack, the strike must be to a designated target area (*datotsu-bui*), made with correct posture, in full spirits (*kiai*), and with the correct part of the *ha-bu* or *e-bu* (*monouchi*.) Upon impact the name of the intended target must be called out. After executing the strike, physical and mental alertness must be maintained (*zanshin*) in order to make another strike if need be, or for protection against a counter-attack. These are all the things that must be kept in mind when practicing strikes with or without a partner.

1- Datotsu-bui (Targets)



Target Areas (Datotsu-Bui)

The *datotsu-bui* or stipulated target areas in Naginata which practitioners aim to strike are *men* (front, left, right), *do* (left, right), *sune* (left, right, both inner and outer), *kote* (left, right), *tsuki* (to the throat). Basic methods for using the *naginata* include *furiage* (lifting the *naginata* overhead and striking), mochikae (swapping grip to enable attacking from the opposite side, or on a different angle), *furikaeshi* (spinning the *naginata* overhead), *kurikomi* (pulling the *naginata* in to shorten the length to strike closer in), *kuridashi* (extending the *naginata* out to make attacks from a further distance (*ma-ai*) possible). There are many different variations depending on the situation, but in all cases the *monouchi* of the *ha-bu* or the *ishizuki* must make contact with one of the target areas for it to be counted as valid. (The *ishizuki* is only allowed for strikes to the *sune*. *Ishizuki-tsuki* to the throat is now prohibited).



Benkei's Pointers

-Furiage
This is the most basic movement when attempting to strike *men*, *kote*, or *sune*. From *chudan*, step forward from the back foot and lift the *naginata* overhead with the hips facing the front. Then step forward again from the other foot, and turn the body back to the side as the *naginata* is brought down for the strike.

-Mochikae
A very characteristic movement in Naginata used for changing *kamae* to strike *men*, *do*, *kote*, and *sune*. From *chudan*, swap the position of the right hand with the left and assume *hasso*, *jodan*, or *wakigamae*.

-Furikaeshi
Furikaeshi is used when attempting to strike *men*, *kote*, or *sune*. From *chudan*, the *naginata* is spun overhead upon launching into attack.

-Kurikomi
This movement of shortening the length of the *naginata* is used after thrusting, when receiving or blocking an attack, and for making an attack from close quarters.

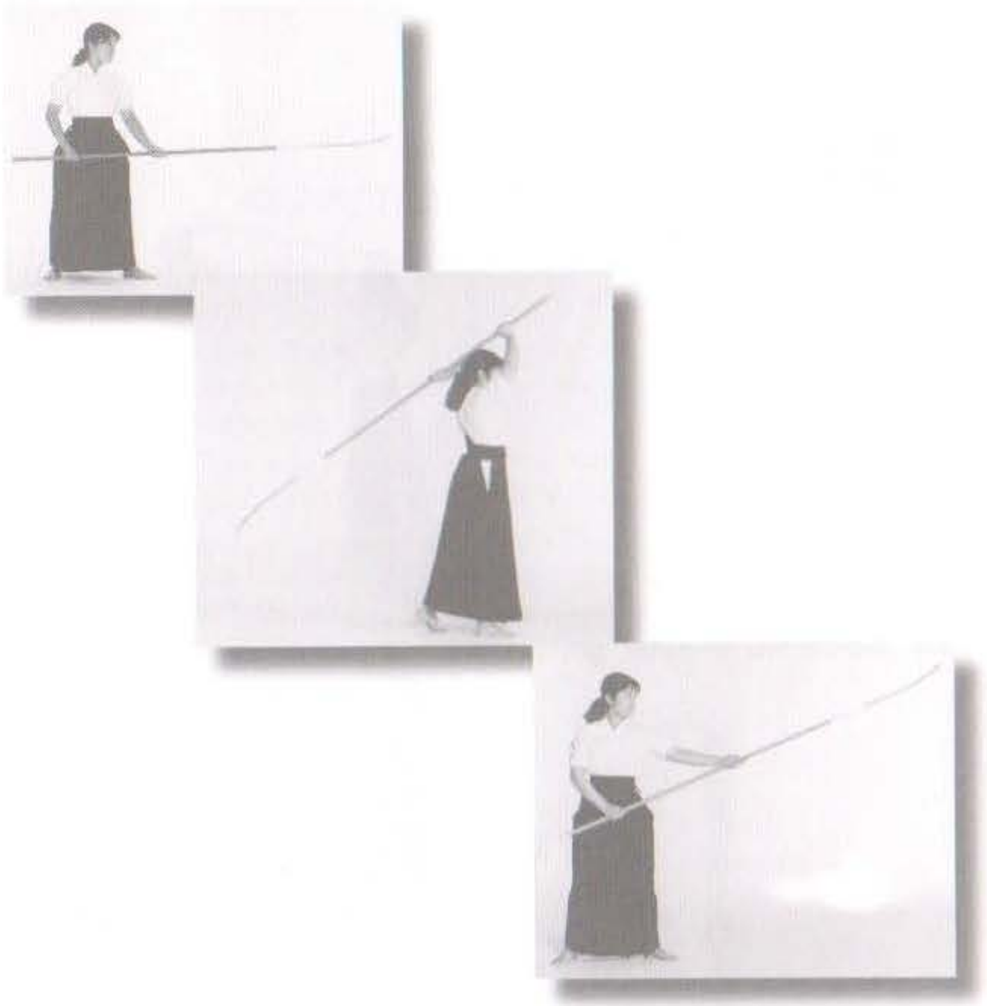
-Kuridashi
Kuridashi is extending the *naginata* out to make it longer and increase striking or thrusting range.

2- Making a Strike

All strikes must be executed accurately, with correct posture, in full spirit, and with the body and *naginata* in perfect unison. Call out the name of the target in a loud concentrated voice as the strike is made. Always look straight ahead, and not at the actual target you are striking. This is the same whether you are actually striking a training partner or when you are doing practise swings.

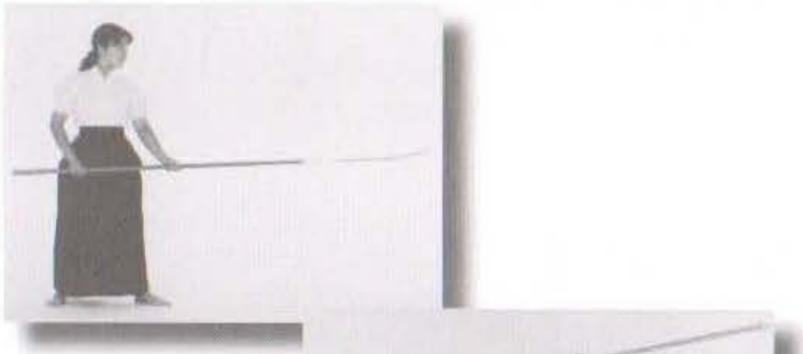
a. Furiage-men-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the rear foot up as the *naginata* is raised overhead with hips facing the front. Make sure that the little finger of the hand closest to the *ishizuki* is not protruding, and that elbows are not fully extended.
(3) Then draw the back foot through as the *naginata* is brought down the body's centre-line in a large straight arc to make the strike. At the completion of the strike, the body should be facing sideways again. Also, be sure to shout "*men*" in a loud voice. The rear hand should grip the *naginata* firmly and finish up positioned at the lower abdomen.



b. Furikaeshi-men-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the front foot back so that the hips are facing the front. Drop the *kissaki* down to the side and back. Bring both hands to meet and overlap directly above the head.
(3) Swap grip (*mochikae*) so that the left hand goes toward the *ishizuki*. Simultaneously step out with the right foot, and swing the hips to the side as the *naginata* is brought down in a large straight arc. The bottom hand should end up lightly touching the lower abdomen.



c. Sokumen-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso*.
(3) Bring the rear foot forward while spinning around to strike *men*. Shout "*men*" as the strike is executed. At the completion of the strike the rear hand should be tucked snugly into the solar-plexus, and the front arm should be in contact with the *e-bu*. As a strike to *sokumen* is a diagonal cut, the *ha-bu* should face down on a diagonal.

d. Sune-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso*.
(3) Step through with the back foot and rotate the body to face the opposite side and strike *sune*.
Shout "*sune*" as you strike. The back hand should be tucked into the solar-plexus, and the front arm should be in contact with the *e-bu*. The front knee should be slightly bent. Make sure that the feet are not too close together, and that the front knee does not come past the toes. The *ha-bu* faces down on a diagonal. Take care to actually strike *sune* with the 'cutting' edge of the *ha-bu*, and not the side.

e. Furiage-sune-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the rear foot up as the *naginata* is lifted overhead and face the hips to the front. Make sure that the little finger of the hand closest to the *ishizuki* is not protruding, and that the elbows are not fully extended.
(3) Then bring the back foot through again bringing the *naginata* down to strike *sune*. The body should end up facing sideways again. Your rear hand should grip the *naginata* firmly and touch your lower abdomen. Be sure to shout "*sune*" as the strike is made.

f. E-zune uchi

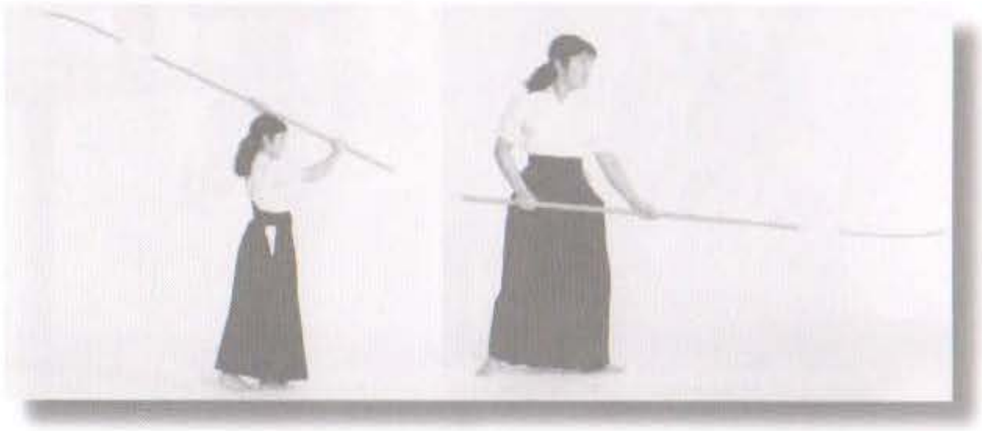
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Throw the *e-bu* (*kuridashi*) out.
(3) As you do this, turn the body while stepping off the rear foot and strike with the *e-bu*. Bend both knees and take care to maintain plenty of space between your feet and hands. Shout "*sune*" as the strike is made.

g. Do-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae*.
(3) Step forward from the rear foot spinning the body around and strike *do*. The rear hand should rest firmly between the hip and navel. The *ha-bu* should be on a slight upward diagonal.

h. Furiage-kote-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the rear foot up to the front foot as the *naginata* is lifted overhead with the hips facing to the front. Make sure that the little finger of the hand closest to the *ishizuki* is not protruding, and that the elbows are not fully extended. The *ishizuki* should go no higher than chin height.
(3) Step out with the front foot as the *naginata* is brought down to strike *kote*. The body should face sideways again. Also, be sure to shout "*kote*" as the strike is made. The *kissaki* should finish at a height slightly lower than what it *would* be in *chudan*.



i. Furikaeshi-kote-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Do exactly as you would for *furikaeshi-men*, but strike *kote* instead.

j. Mochikae-kote-uchi

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso*,
(3) Draw your rear foot forward as you spin your body around and strike *kote*.

k. Tsuki

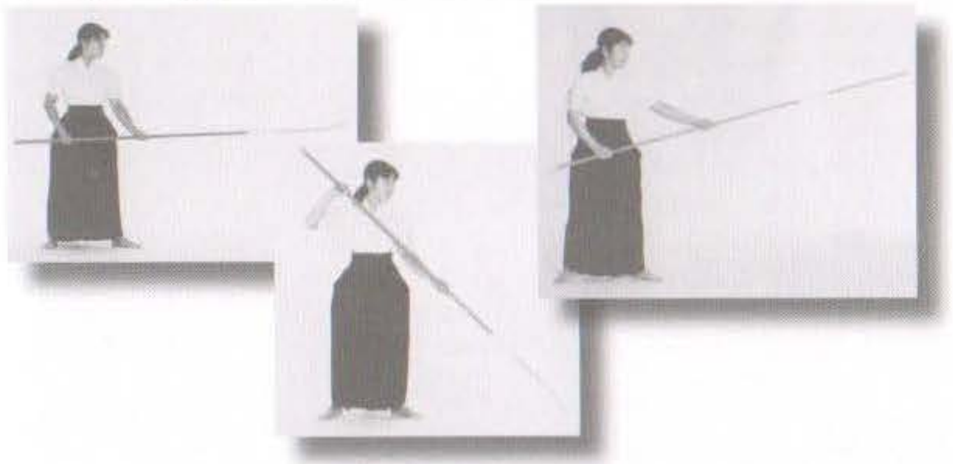
The thrust to the throat is a very powerful and frightening technique. If not executed correctly it could very easily result in injury to your training partner or opponent. Therefore, it is important to attempt this technique only when you are able to use the *naginata* skillfully. *Tsuki* is prohibited to high school students or lower. Recently *tsuki* to the throat with the *ishizuki* has become prohibited. *Tsuki* can be executed directly (*chokutotsu*) or by extending the *naginata* out (*kuridashi*).

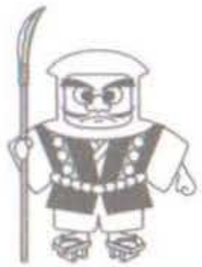
- *Chokutotsu*

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) grip the *naginata* firmly with the rear hand and move it forward from the back thigh to the lower abdomen area. The grip of the front hand should be light enough to allow the *naginata* to slide. Stepping forward with *okuri-ashi* from the front foot while thrusting, and just as the *kissaki* contacts the throat, turn the *ha-bu* facing outward and tighten grip on impact. Shout "*tsuki*". (Take care that your feet are not too close together).

- *Kurikomi-tsuki*

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Pull your rear hand back so that it is shoulder height. Let the *naginata* slide back through your front hand (*kurikomi*) into *gedan*.
(3) Then, stepping forward with *okuri-ashi*, thrust the *naginata* out by sliding it through the front hand until it hits the throat. Just as the *kissaki* contacts the throat, turn the *ha-bu* outward and tighten grip on impact. Shout "*tsuki*".



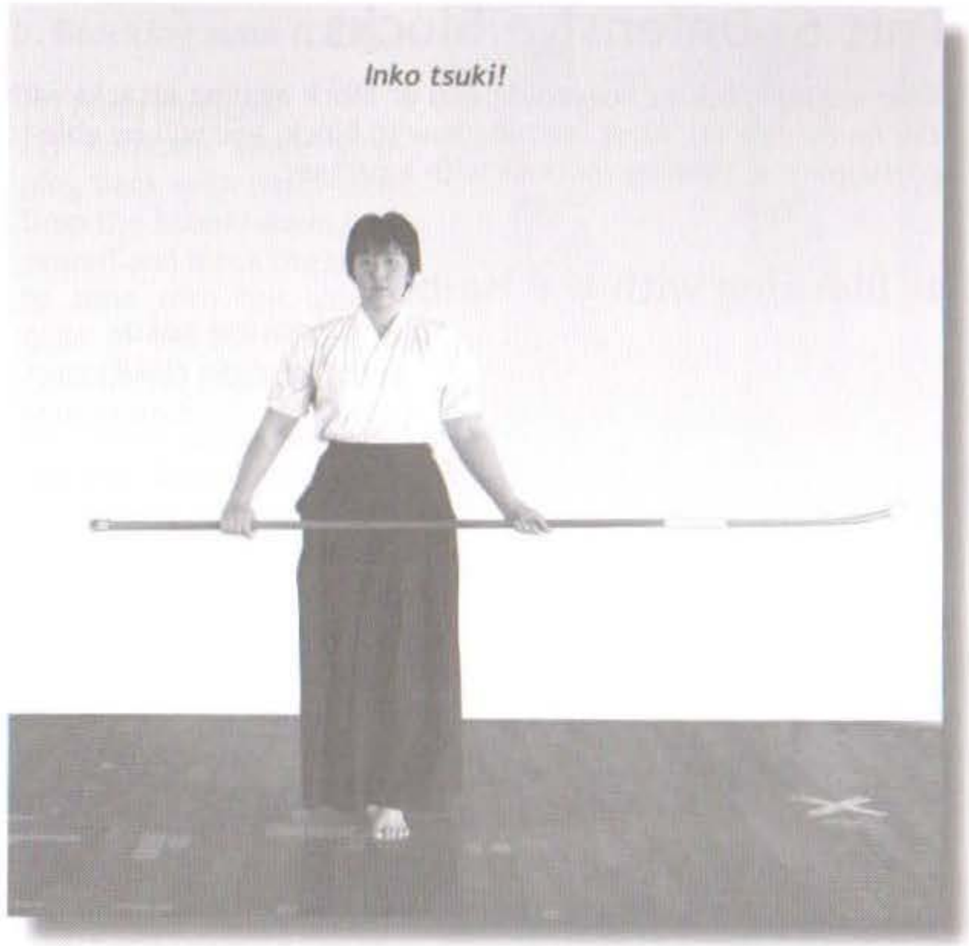


Benkei's Pointers

Always shout the name of the target you are striking. When practising strikes by yourself, imagine the targets to be at the same height as they are on you. Naturally, this will change when you have a partner to practise with depending on their height. Practise repeatedly until your *naginata*, body, and spirit (*kiai*) expressed through shouting the name of the targets as you strike are all in unison. When doing *mochikae* before an attack, make sure that your body doesn't face forwards as you change *kamae*. Regardless of how experienced you are, always return the basics (*kihon*). Maintain a straight posture, and make all your techniques large and precise. If you are able to make your techniques large and precise, it is an easy step to make them smaller and faster at will while still maintaining correct form.

All of these *kihon* strikes can be practised alone or in groups. When instructing a group of students, the standard procedure at the beginning of training is to practise footwork first, followed by *happo-buri* and then striking practise. The instructor stands at the front of the *dojo*, and the students all assume *chudan* with their *kissaki* pointed towards the instructor. The instructor will give commands to strike. For example, at the command of "*men o ute!*" (strike *furiage-men*), the instructor will then drop their *kissaki* down as if to show an opening for *men*, and the students will strike *men* in unison. When the instructor lifts their *kissaki* back up, this is the signal to move back ready for the next command. "*Men o ute!*" (strike *furiage-men*), "*sokumen o ute!*" (*mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *men*), "*sayu-men o ute!*" (*mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *men* then repeat on the other side), "*sune o ute!*" (*mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*), "*furiage-sune o ute*", "*men-sune o ute!*" (strike *furiage-men* then *mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*), "*furikaeshi-men o ute!*", "*kote o ute!*"... And any number of combinations in any order...

From *chudan-no-kamae*



Group kihon practise at the outset of training

Part 6- Defensive Blocks

Next we will look at how to defend or block against attacks with the *ha-bu* or *e-bu*. After learning how to block, you will be able to participate in training routines with a partner.

1- Blocking with the Ha-bu

a. Blocking soku-men and do (L&R)

Blocking a strike to sokumen

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *kurikomi* while stepping back with *okuri-ashi*. The left elbow should be tucked lightly into the side of the body, and the back hand rests on the upper thigh. Block any strike to the *men*, *sokumen*, *do* with the *shinogi* (side of the blade) at the *monouchi*.

Blocking a strike to do

Blocking a strike to sokumen
(L) (R)

b. Blocking sune (L&R)

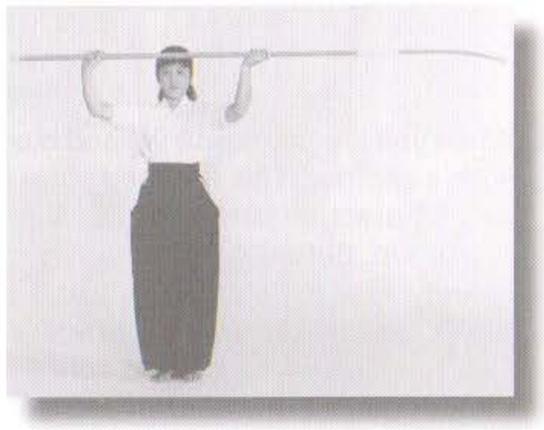
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) *Kurikomi* while stepping back with *okuri-ashi*. Drop the *kissaki* down (like *gedan*) and block the strike to *sune* with the *shinogi* (side of the blade) at the *monouchi*. Tighten grip with impact.

Blocking a strike to sune
(L) (R)

2- Blocking with the E-bu

a. Blocking men

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the front foot back to the same positioning as the back foot. At the same time turn the body to the front and lift the *naginata* above your forehead. Block the incoming *men* strike at the centre of the *e-bu*. Take care that the hands are not spread too far apart or close together, and do not stretch the arms out too far. Also, take care not to hold the *naginata* too low lest you be struck in the head by accident.



Blocking sokumen

b. Blocking sokumen & sune

(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Draw the front foot back as the body is turned to face the opposite direction, while the *e-bu* is thrust out (*kuri-dashi*) and pulling the *ishizu-ki* up in front of the face to block the strike to *men* with the *monouchi* of the *e-bu*. Tighten grip on impact.

Blocking sune

When you are able to strike and block, you will be able to practice with a partner. This is called *sotai*. The next chapter will outline various practice patterns to enable you to train with a partner or in a group. Before delving into the techniques, first it is necessary to know how to bow to your partner and show the necessary courtesies, so that the training flows without unnecessary stoppage.
(1) From *shizentai*, bow to your partner without losing eye-contact.
(2) Assume *ai-chudan* (mutual *chudan*).
(3) Alternate between the striking role and the blocking role.
(4) When you have finished, return to *ai-chudan*, then draw your front foot back and assume *shizentai*.
(5) Bow once more to your partner, and always maintain eye-contact from start to finish.

Chapter 4:

Practical Lessons

With a Partner

A girls' Naginata class
(Sonobe Hideo & Shigehachi "Gakko Naginata-do" 1936)

Part 1- Uchikaeshi

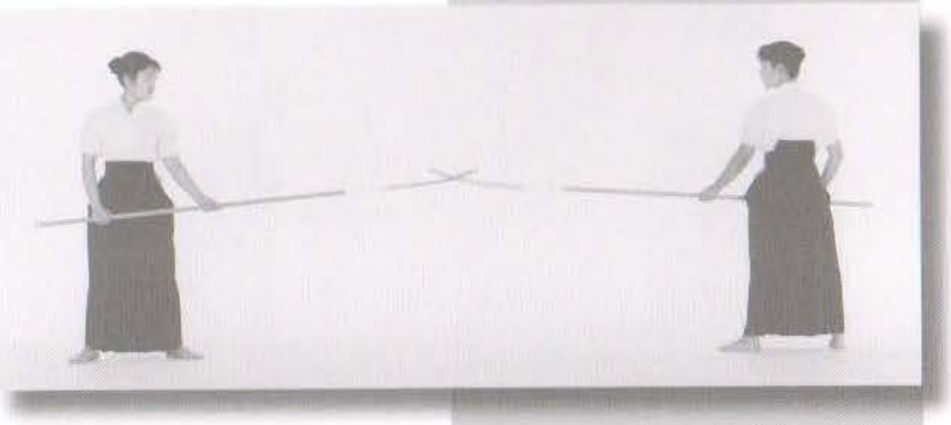
In this chapter, we will utilise the strikes and blocks in attacking and receiving sequences. *Uchikaeshi* is one of the most basic exercises practised in Naginata. *Uchikaeshi* helps the practitioner develop an understanding of *ma-ai* (distancing), body movement and footwork, breathing technique, grip and use of power in the strike, and so on. All these are extremely important elements in Naginata. It also teaches the practitioner striking opportunities, correct and accurate technique, and helps develop the necessary muscular groups and stamina necessary for effective training. Therefore, *uchikaeshi* is a basic exercise which is indispensable to beginners and advanced exponents alike. It is usually practised at the beginning and end of the training session, and can be done with or without *bogu* (armour).

The order of the strikes is:

Shomen - *sayu-men* (L&R) - *sayu-sune* - back to *chudan* - *shomen*			
(*furiage*)- (*mochikae* x 2)-		(*mochikae* x 2)-	(*furiage*)
"men!"	*"men-men!"*	*"sune-sune!"*	*"men!"*

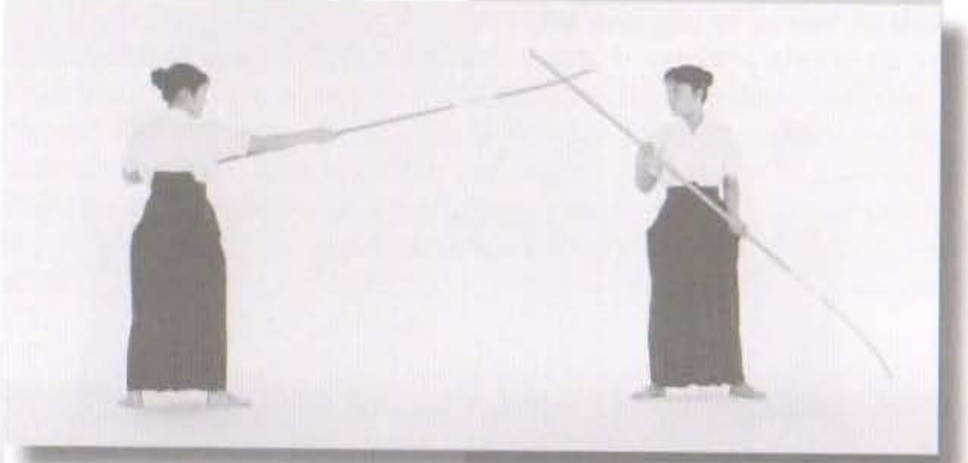
The strikes are made going forwards, however more advanced practitioners can repeat the same order going backwards as well. The attacker (*Uchikata*) should continue striking as accurately as possible without stopping, preferably doing one sequence in one breath. The receiver (*Ukekata*) is responsible for maintaining correct distance (*ma-ai*), and must encourage and help the attacker to strike vigorously and effectively. The receiver moves back when the attacker is advancing, and moves forward when the attacker is retreating.

Uchikaeshi is an exercise which is designed not only to benefit the attacker, but also the receiver. *Ukekata* is not just providing the targets for *Uchikata* to hit, but must also consider and master many of the fundamentals of Naginata in order to receive the attacks properly. It is a learning experience for both sides, and cooperation is essential for safety and advancement.

Attacker	Receiver
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
	
(2) Move forward and strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Move back with *okuri-ashi*, pull the *naginata* in, and block the strike at the *monouchi*.

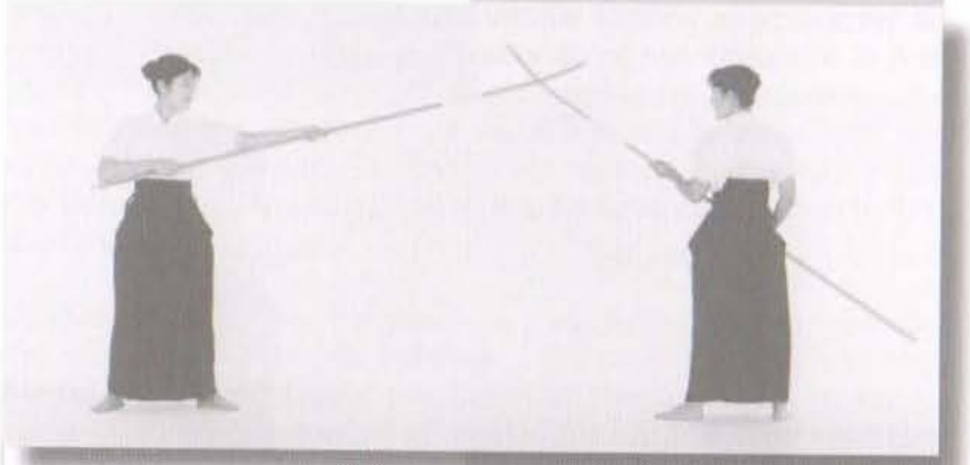
(3) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).

(3)' Move back and block the strike to *men* with the *monouchi* of the *e-bu*.



(4) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).

(4)' Move back and block the strike to *men* with the *ha-bu*.

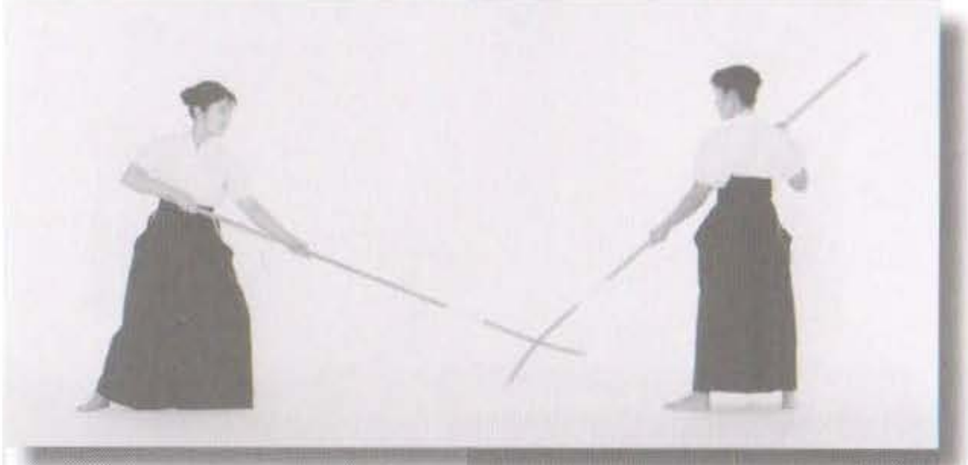


(5) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

(5)' Move back and block the strike to *sune* with the *monouchi* of the *e-bu*.

(6) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

(6)' Move back and block the strike to *sune* with the *ha-bu*.

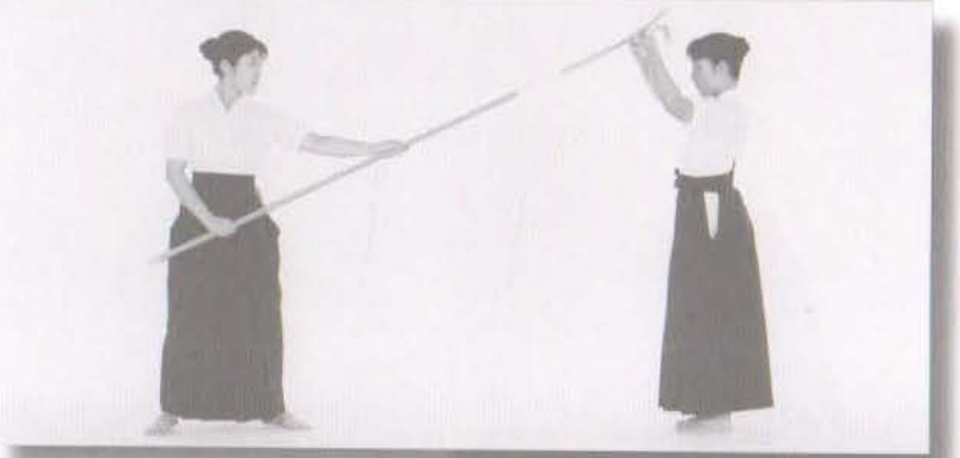


(7) On the same spot, lift the *kissaki* up and assume *chudan*.

(7)' Retreat to adjust the distance and assume *chudan*.

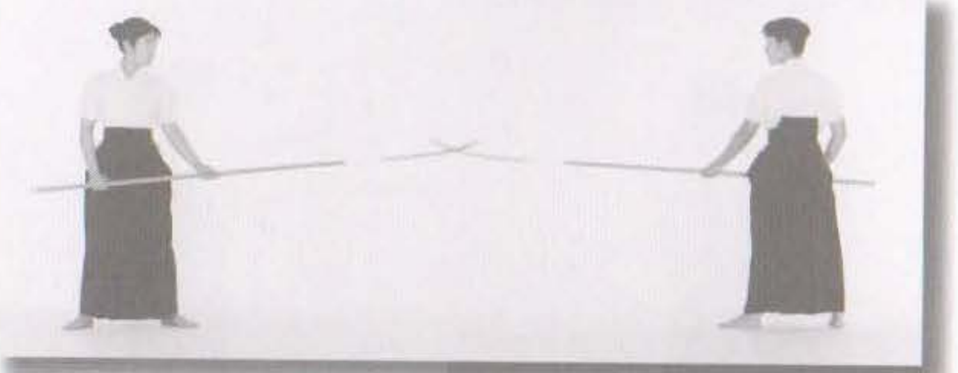
(8) Move forward and strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).

(8)' Move back and block the strike to *men* with the centre of the *e-bu*.

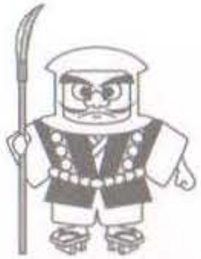


(9) Retreat to adjust the distance and assume *chudan*.

(9)' On the same spot, drop the *kissaki* down and assume *chudan*.



After finishing this sequence, either repeat the techniques in the same order while going backwards, or change roles.



Benkei's Pointers

Attacker-

1. Always maintain eye-contact, and try not to look down at *sune* when striking.
2. Aim to do *uchikaeshi* slowly and accurately rather than quickly and imprecisely. Make each movement as pronounced and exact as possible. For example, when assuming *hasso*, make sure that the body is side-on before launching in for the strike. This is not to say that you should stop each time you assume *hasso*. Try to make the sequence flow.
3. The cutting edge of the *ha-bu* should connect with the target on the correct angle. You can't cut with the side of the blade.
4. The *naginata* and body should move in unison. The strike must be made with the whole body, not just the arms.
5. Endeavour to complete the sequence in one breath. This will improve stamina and cardiovascular strength, and the practitioner will learn how to string techniques together rather than stopping and starting.

Receiver:

1. The receiver's job is to encourage the attacker to strike as cleanly as possible.
2. Always take care to maintain the correct striking distance. If the receiver is too close, the attacker's technique will become small, cramped, and deep rather than expansive and flowing. If the attacker is too far away, their striking will become disjointed, unbalanced, and shallow. The receiver should maintain just the right distance to encourage large strikes with the *monouchi* hitting the target. You are working with the attacker, not against them.

3. Do not move before the attack is made, but wait until the attacker has assumed the *kamae* and is just starting to make the attack. This will teach you to judge when an attack is about to be made.
4. When receiving with *bogu* on, make the targets clear and easy to hit. When practicing without *bogu*, block each strike with the *monouchi* slightly off target. For example, when receiving the first *men* strike, move back with *okuri-ashi* and pull the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*) with the *monouchi* receiving the strike slightly off centre, at the point where your head was before moving. This is also applicable for the *sayu-men* and *sayu-sune* strikes.
5.Also, try to receive the sequence of strikes in one breath for the same reasons as the attacker.

Part 2- Naginata Techniques:

In this section we will look at the plethora of techniques (*waza*) found in Naginata. All of these techniques can be practised with or without *bogu*, but it is advisable to practise without to begin with, and thus learn the correct distance and timing. Naginata techniques can be divided into two broad categories. The first is *shikake-waza*, which are techniques initiated by the attacker. The other group is *oji-waza*, which are counter-attacks executed in relation to the opponent's initial attack. The following are the sub-categories of *waza* found in these two groups:

Shikake-waza:

- ***Fumikomi-waza:*** Direct attack, forwards and backwards.
- ***Nidan-waza & sandan-waza:*** Two or three consecutive strikes.
- ***Harai-waza:*** Deflecting the opponent's *naginata* then striking.
- ***Debana-waza:*** Technique of striking just as the opponent is about to.
- ***Hiki-waza:*** Striking while going backwards from *seri-ai*, or close-quarters.

Oji-waza:

- ***Uke-waza:*** Blocking the opponent's attack with the *ha-bu* or *e-bu*, then making an immediate counter-attack.
- ***Nuki-waza:*** Dodging the opponent's attack by moving the whole body or the target out of range, and then making a counter-attack.
- ***Uchiotoshi-waza:*** Striking the opponent's *naginata* down with the *ha-bu* or the *e-bu* when they are defending or making an attack, and then striking at their unbalanced posture.
- ***Makiotoshi-waza:*** Using the curvature of the blade (*sori*) to flick the opponent's *naginata* away prior to, during, or after their attack, and then executing a counter-attack which takes advantage of their unbalanced posture.
- ***Ukenagashi-waza:*** Parrying the opponent's attack and letting their *naginata* slide away, using the momentum of the deflection to counter-attack.

Shikake-waza must be executed as a solid confident attack on opponent's target areas. When performing *oji-waza*, the opponent's initial attack is nullified by being blocked, parried or avoided, and is then followed up immediately with a counter-attack, taking advantage of the attacker's resulting unbalanced physical and mental disposition. *Oji-waza* can only be executed successfully if the counter-attack is a positive and calculated move as opposed to a knee-jerk reaction. Now we will consider training sequences for the techniques listed above. Firstly, *shikake-waza*.

1- Shikake-waza

a. Ni/San-dan-waza

Nidan-waza and *sandan-waza* are techniques where two or three strikes are made continuously in one attack. For example, if your opponent blocks or avoids your first attack, or your strikes are inadequate, then you must follow up immediately with another strike. Attempt to make each strike count, making sure that you use your legs well, and that the attack is vigorous and unrelenting. Ideally, you should aim to be able to judge the failure of your initial attack and release another strike instantaneously, without pausing and thinking about it first. Here are some examples you can practise with a partner, with or without *bogu*.

Attacker	Receiver
Men-sune-uchi	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *men* with *ha-bu*.
(3) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(3)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(4) Separate. Both assume *migi-chudan*.	

(5) Strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).	(5)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *men* with *ha-bu*.
(6) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune* (Shout *sune*).	(6)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(7) Separate. Both assume *chudan*. Swap roles and repeat.	
Sune-sokumen-uchi	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Strike *furiage-sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(2)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *sune* with *ha-bu*.
(3) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).	(3)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(4) Separate. Both assume *migi-chudan*.	
(5) Strike *furiage-sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(5)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *sune* with *ha-bu*.
(6) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen* (Shout *men*).	(6)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(7) Separate. Both assume *chudan*. Swap roles and repeat.	

Men-sune-do-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *men*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *men* with *ha-bu*.
(3) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).	(3)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(4) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae* and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).	(4)' Retreat and block with the *ha-bu*.

(5) Separate. Both assume *chudan*.

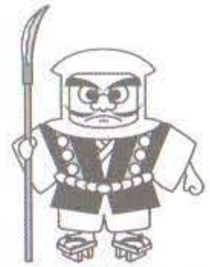
Sune-sokumen-sune-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *furiage-sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(2)' Retreat with *okuri-ashi*, *kurikomi*, and block *sune* with *ha-bu*.
(3) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).	(3)' Retreat and block with the *e-bu*.
(4) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(4)' Retreat and block with the *ha-bu*.

(5) Separate. Both assume *chudan*.

Think up your own combinations for *ni-dan* and *san-dan* techniques and incorporate them into your training.



Benkei's Pointers

Ma-ai

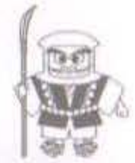
When faced with an opponent, the question of distance between the two practitioners takes on the utmost importance. *Ma-ai* is the term used to refer to distance. In other words, in Naginata this means the gap between two opponents. The standard *ma-ai* is called *uchi-ma*. This is the distance in which you are able to strike your opponent by taking one step forward, or avoid an attack by taking one step back. A close interval is referred to as *chika-ma*. From *chika-ma*, one's strikes can easily reach the opponent, but on the other hand, so can their's. This is a dangerous interval to be in. The opposite of *chika-ma* is *to-ma*, or distant interval. From this distance it is very difficult for either to make a successful strike, and is thus considered a safe interval.

Each person has a different preferred distance for engagement. This depends on the height, reach, and dexterity of each individual practitioner. The establishment of *ma-ai* and maintaining one's own preferred distance through the relationship with the opponent is very subtle, and is often the decisive factor in winning or losing a match. *Ma-ai* should be studied carefully.

b. Debana-waza

Debana-waza refers to techniques in which you strike your opponent just as they are contemplating an attack. In other words, you take the initiative and strike them first. A good indicator of your opponent's intention to strike is when their *kissaki* starts to move up or strays away from the centre-line. When executing *debana-waza* take care not to make your strike too small. Use your whole body in the strike rather than tapping just with your hands, and practise hitting with big techniques.

Attacker	Receiver
Rising kissaki	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Start to strike *men*. (*Kissaki* begins to rise).	(2)' Quickly *mochikae* into *hasso*, move to the side with *hiraki-ashi* and strike *sune* (Shout *sune*).
(3) Move back and assume *hidari-chudan*.	(3)' Move back and assume *migi-chudan*.
(4) Start to strike *men*. (*Kissaki* begins to rise).	(4)' Quickly *mochikae* into *hasso*, move to the side with *hiraki-ashi* and strike *sune* (Shout *sune*).
(4) Separate. Assume *ai-chudan*.	
Dropping kissaki	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Start to strike *sune*. (*Kissaki* begins to drop).	(2)' Quickly lunge forward and strike *men*. (Shout *men*).
(3) Separate. Assume *ai-chudan*.	



Important Points:

1. In order to execute *debana-waza* successfully, you must be able to read your opponent's intention to attack before their movement even begins. This is a skill which requires intense concentration and can only be learned through years of training.
2. As soon as your opponent is about to strike, you have to be bold and take the initiative yourself without fear of being struck in the process.
3. Practice *debana-waza* in pairs with *bogu*.

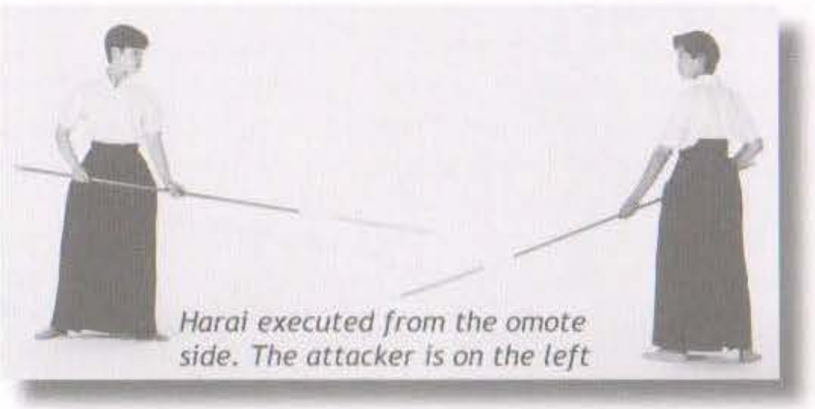
c. Harai-waza

Harai-waza is the act of knocking the opponent's *naginata* from above or below on either the *ura* or *omote* side. (The *omote* side of the *naginata* is the right-hand side when held in *hidari-chudan*). The moment that the opponent's *kamae* is broken an attack must be made immediately to the revealed opening. If you stop after making the *harai*, the ensuing technique will be unsuccessful.

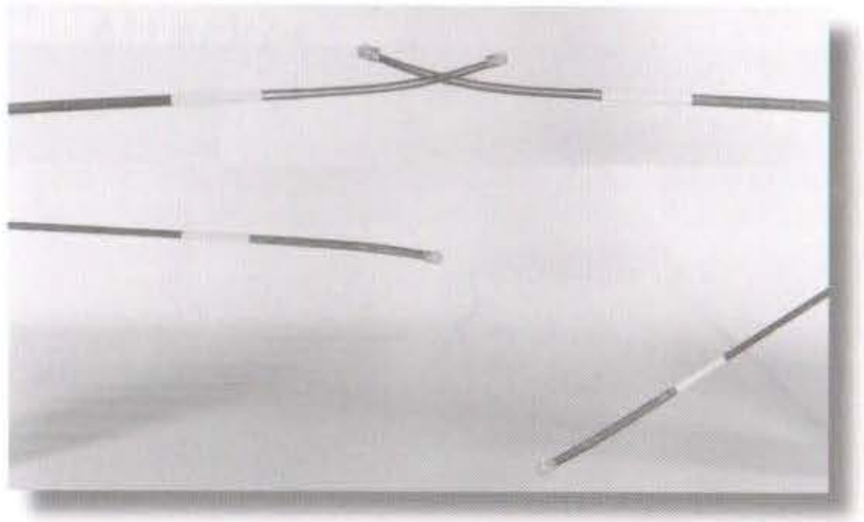
Omote-harai

(1) From *chudan*,

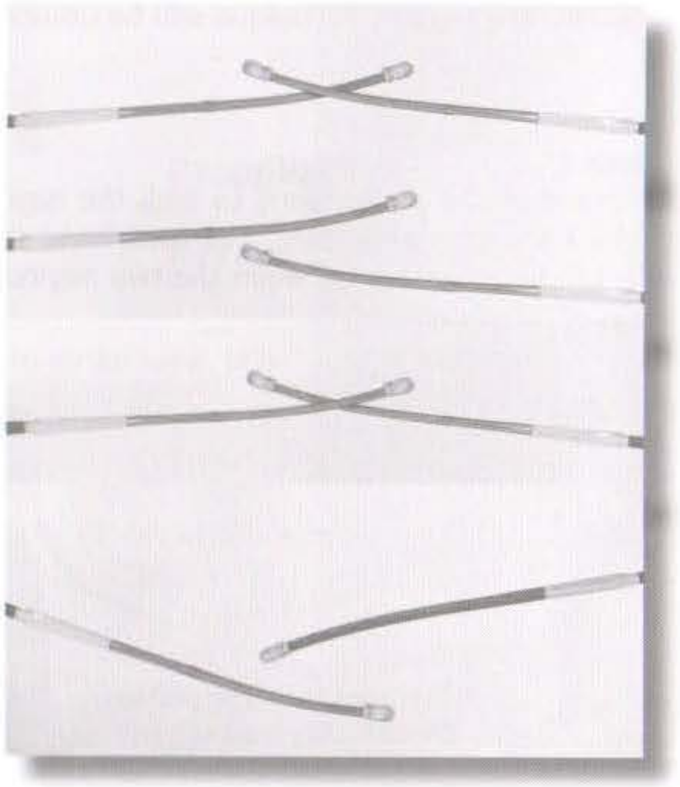
(2) Use the curve of the blade (*sori*) to flick the *naginata* down while stepping back with *okuri-ashi*. The back hand should be in contact with the hip. Contact between the two *naginata* is made at the *shinogi* of the *monouchi*.



Harai executed from the omote side. The attacker is on the left



Ura-harai
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Move the *kissaki* down and under the opponent's blade.
(3) Using the curve (*sori*) of the *ha-bu*, flick the opponent's *naginata* down with the *shinogi* of the *monouchi* while moving back with *okuri-ashi*. The back hand should be touching the hip.



Harai with the e-bu
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Slide both hands towards the *ha-bu*.
(3) As you turn to face the opposite side, strike the opponent's *naginata* on the *ura* side with the *monouchi* of the *e-bu*. The rear hand should rest lightly on the hip, and the front hand should slide in naturally as the *harai* is executed.

Harai with the ha-bu, then strike men
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Lunge in and strike the opponent's *naginata* on the *omote* side with the *ha-bu*.
(3) Immediately lift the *naginata* overhead and strike *men*.
(Shout *men*).
(4) Return to the starting position with *tsugi-ashi* while assuming *chudan*.

Harai with the ha-bu, then strike kote
(1) From *chudan*,
(2) Bring the *kissaki* under and across the opponent's *naginata* and strike it on the *ura* side with the *ha-bu*.
(3) Immediately bring the *naginata* overhead and strike *kote* (Shout *kote*).
(4) Return to the starting position with *tsugi-ashi* while assuming *chudan*.

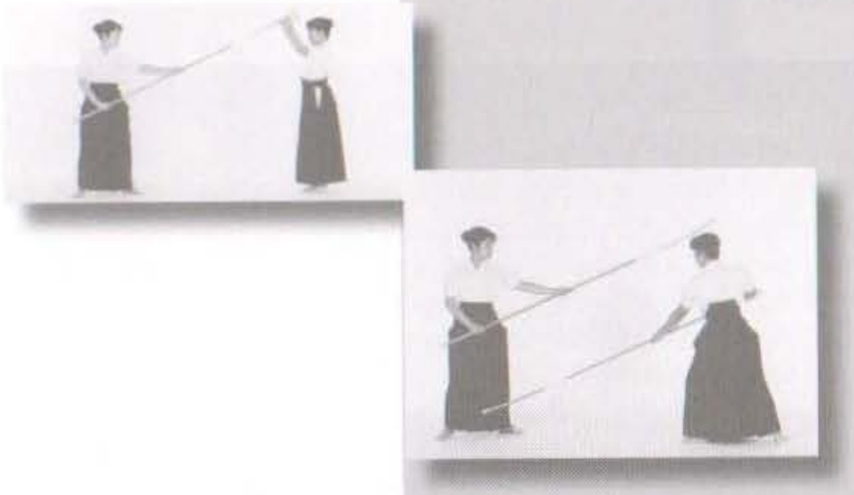
Important Points:
1. It is important to utilise the whole body when executing *harai-waza*, rather than just the arms.
2. Take care to not to use too much power in the arms as you will also find yourself unbalanced and unable to execute techniques after the *harai*. In the worst case scenario, the opponent may be able to take advantage of your unbalanced position instead.
3. Follow up with an attack the instant the *harai* is executed. In order to do this effectively, try not to deviate too far from the centreline when executing the *harai*. The point of *harai* is to unbalance the opponent and move their *kissaki* away from the centre, thereby making it difficult for them to attack.

2- Oji-waza

a. Uke-waza

Uke-waza refers to techniques in which the opponent's attack is blocked with the *ha-bu* or *e-bu*, and is immediately followed with a counter-attack. As soon as the attack is started, move to an appropriate distance and receive the attack with the side of the *ha-bu* or *e-bu* at the *monouchi*. The instant the block is made, adjust the length of the *naginata* with *kuridashi* or *kurikomi* and execute a counter-attack.

Attacker	Receiver
Men-uke-sune	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Retreat and block *men* with *e-bu*.
(3) Stop in that position.	(3)' Immediately move to the left with hiraki-ashi and strike sune. (Shout sune).



(4) Separate. Assume *ai-chudan*.

b. Nuki-waza

Nuki-waza involves luring the opponent into making an attack, then dodging the attack so that they 'strike air' and immediately executing a counter-attack. Timing is vital, and close observation of the opponent's movements is essential to execute *nuki-waza* effectively. As with all *oji-waza* it is important that it is not merely reactive. The opponent must be consciously coaxed into making an attack which is then avoided and turned against them. In other words, the ability to control the opponent is an important element of the success of all *oji-waza*.

Attacker	Receiver
Sune-nuki-men	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(2)' Draw both feet back to dodge the strike, and simultaneously lift the *naginata* overhead.
(3)' Stay in that position.	(3) Immediately move forward with *okuri-ashi* and strike men. (Shout *men*).
(4) Assume *migi-chudan*.	(4)' Assume *hidari-chudan*.
(5) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).	(5)' Draw both feet back to dodge the strike, and simultaneously lift the *naginata* overhead.
(6) Stay in that position.	(6)' Immediately move forward with *okuri-ashi* and strike men. (Shout *men*).

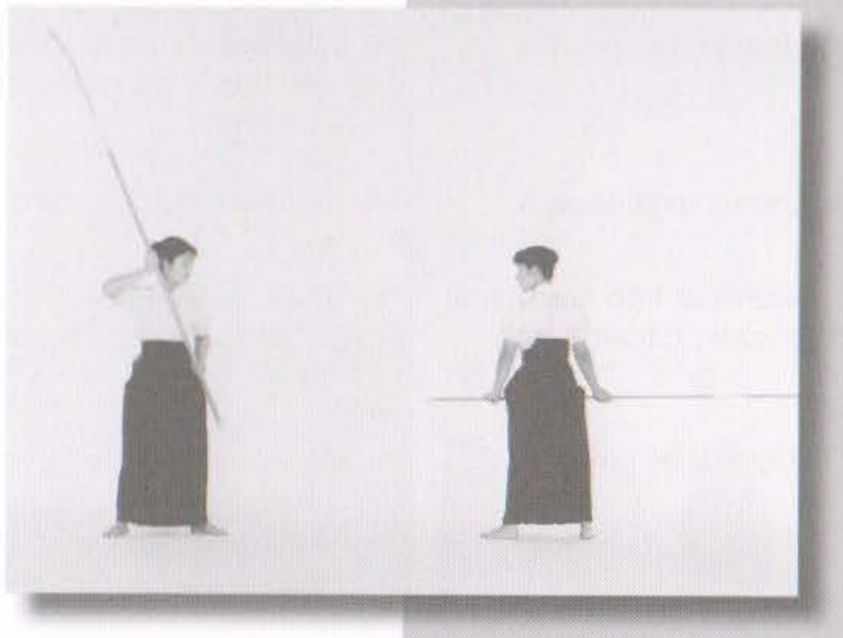
(7) Separate. Both assume *migi-chudan*.

Kote-nuki-men

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

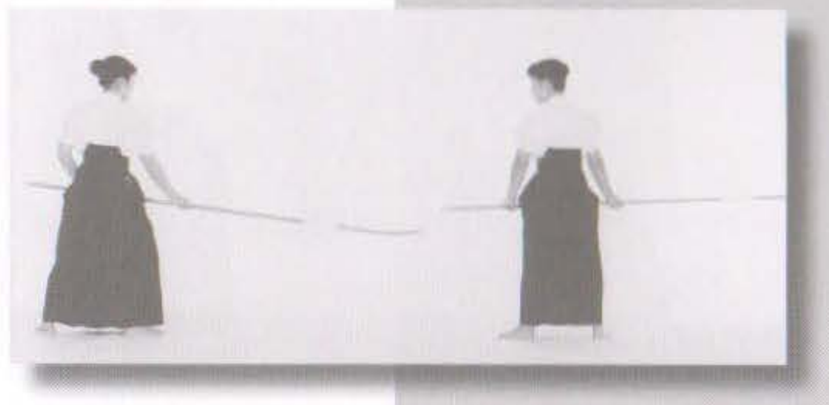
(2) Assume *hasso*.

(2)' Assume *wakigamae*.



(2) Step through with the back foot and strike *kote*. (Shout *kote*).

(2)' Remaining in *wakigamae*, step back with *okuri-ashi* to avoid the strike to *kote*.



(3)' Stay in that position.

(3) Immediately step through from the back foot and strike *men*. (Shout *men*).

(4) Move back and assume *hasso* again.

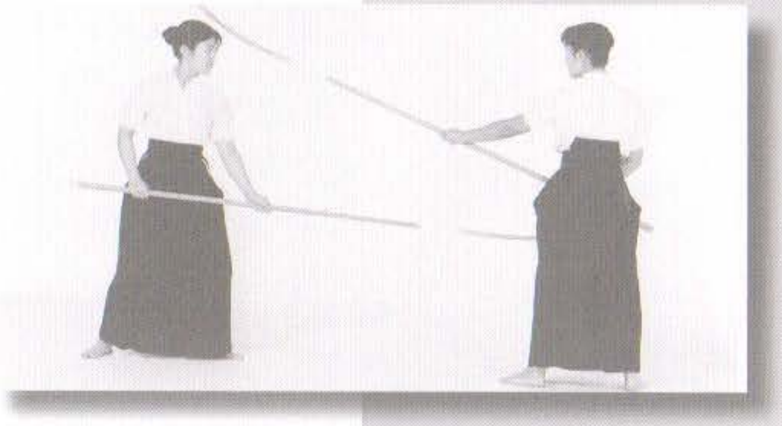
(4)' Move back and assume *wakigamae* again.

(5) Step through with the back foot and strike *kote*. (Shout *kote*).

(5)' Remaining in *wakigamae*, step back with *okuri-ashi* to avoid the strike to *kote*.

(6) Stay in that position.

(6)' Immediately step through from the back foot and strike *men*. (Shout *men*).

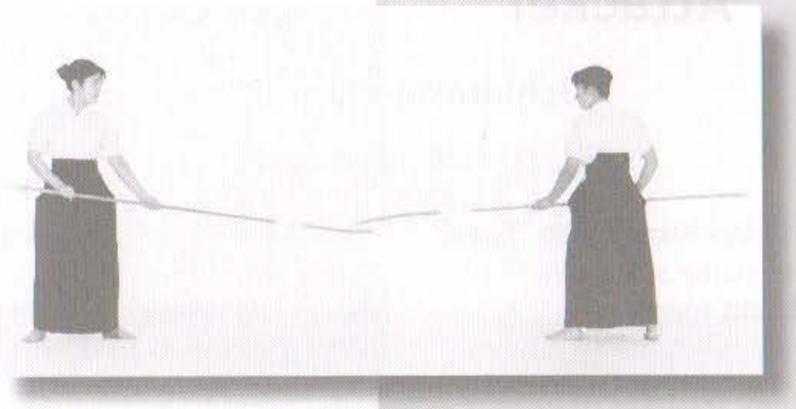


(7) Separate. Assume *ai-chudan*.

c. Makiotoshi-waza

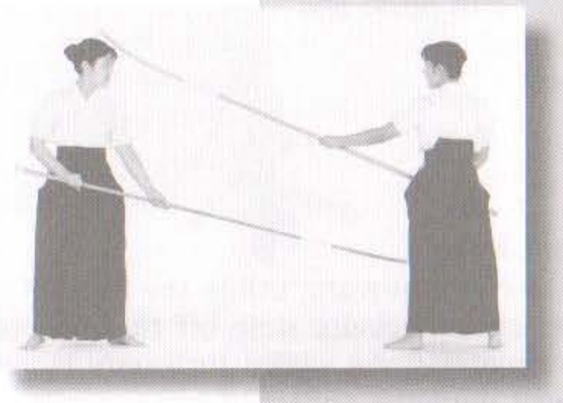
Makiotoshi-waza utilises the *sori* of the *ha-bu* to force the opponent's *naginata* down. It is especially effective when the opponent has momentarily lost concentration, or just after they have blocked an attack. When executing *makiotoshi-waza*, use the whole body, not just the hands, but also take care to maintain balance at all times.

Attacker	Receiver
Makiotoshi-men- uchi	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) Strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Block with the *ha-bu*. Then step back as you flick the opponent's *naginata* down using the *sori*. The position of the back hand does not move.



(4)' Stay in that position.

(4) Immediately strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men*).



(5) Separate. Assume *ai-chudan*.

d. Uchiotoshi-waza

When the opponent is about to attack, use this technique to hit the *naginata* down to the right or left using the *ha-bu* or *e-bu*. This will render the strike ineffective, and at the same provide an opportunity to counter-strike. Again, as with all techniques, it is important to use the *naginata* and body as a unified force to be effective.

Attacker	Receiver
Uchiotoshi-men- uchi	
(1) From *ai-chudan*,	
(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).	(2)' Move away from the strike while knocking the *naginata* down with the *e-bu*. Follow up with a strike to *sune*. (Shout *sune*).
(3) Both assume *migi-chudan*.	
(4) *Mochikae* into *hasso* and strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*.)	(4)' Move away from the strike while knocking the *naginata* down with the *e-bu*. Follow up with a strike to *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

d. Ukenagashi-waza

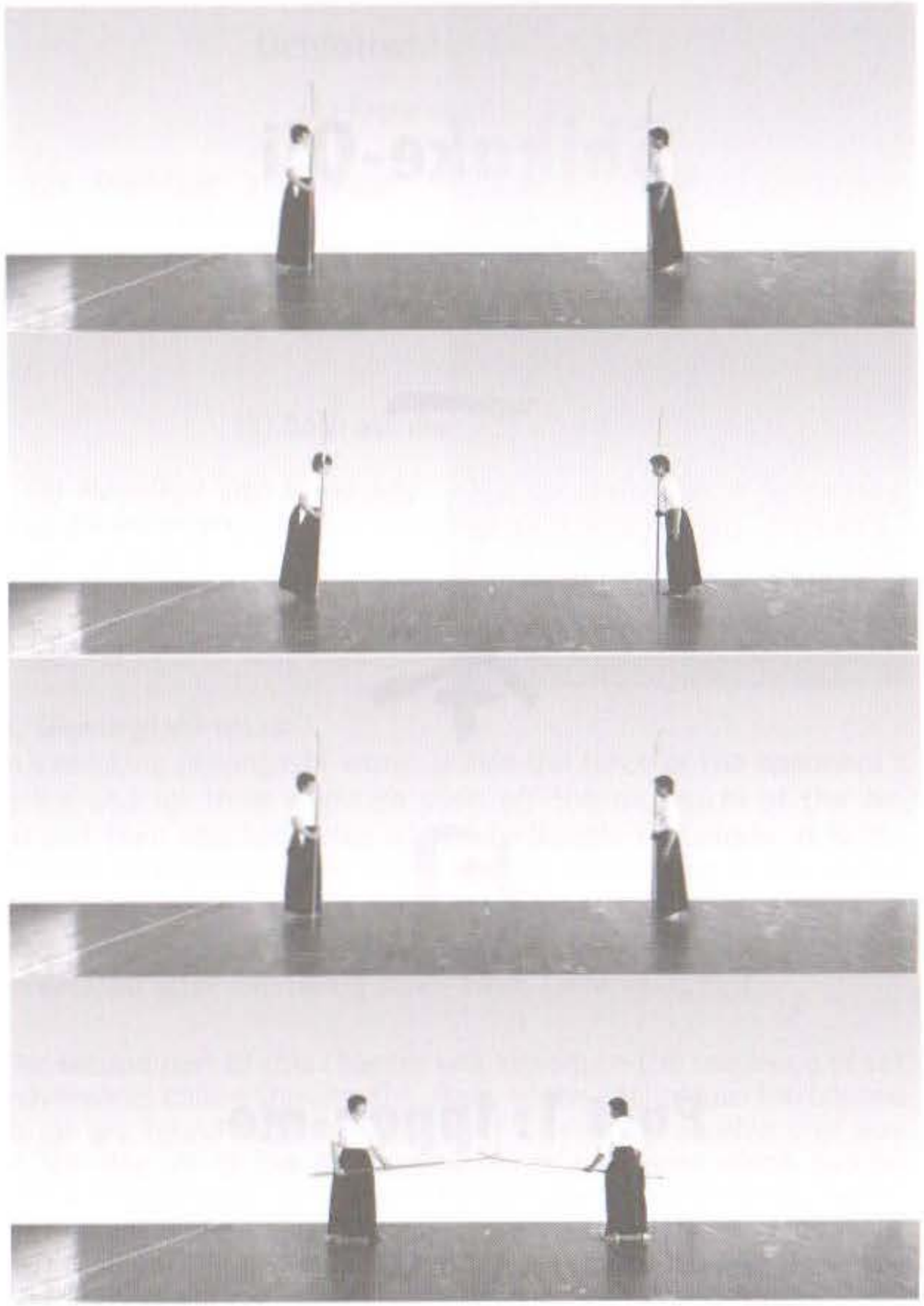
In executing *ukenagashi-waza*, utilise the force of the opponent's strike and let their *naginata* slide off the *monouchi* of the *ha-bu* and then counter-strike with a *furikaeshi* technique. It is important to wait until the opponent has committed to the strike before moving to execute this technique. *Uchiotoshi-waza* and *ukenagashi-waza* are advanced techniques which should only be attempted after mastering other basic techniques first.

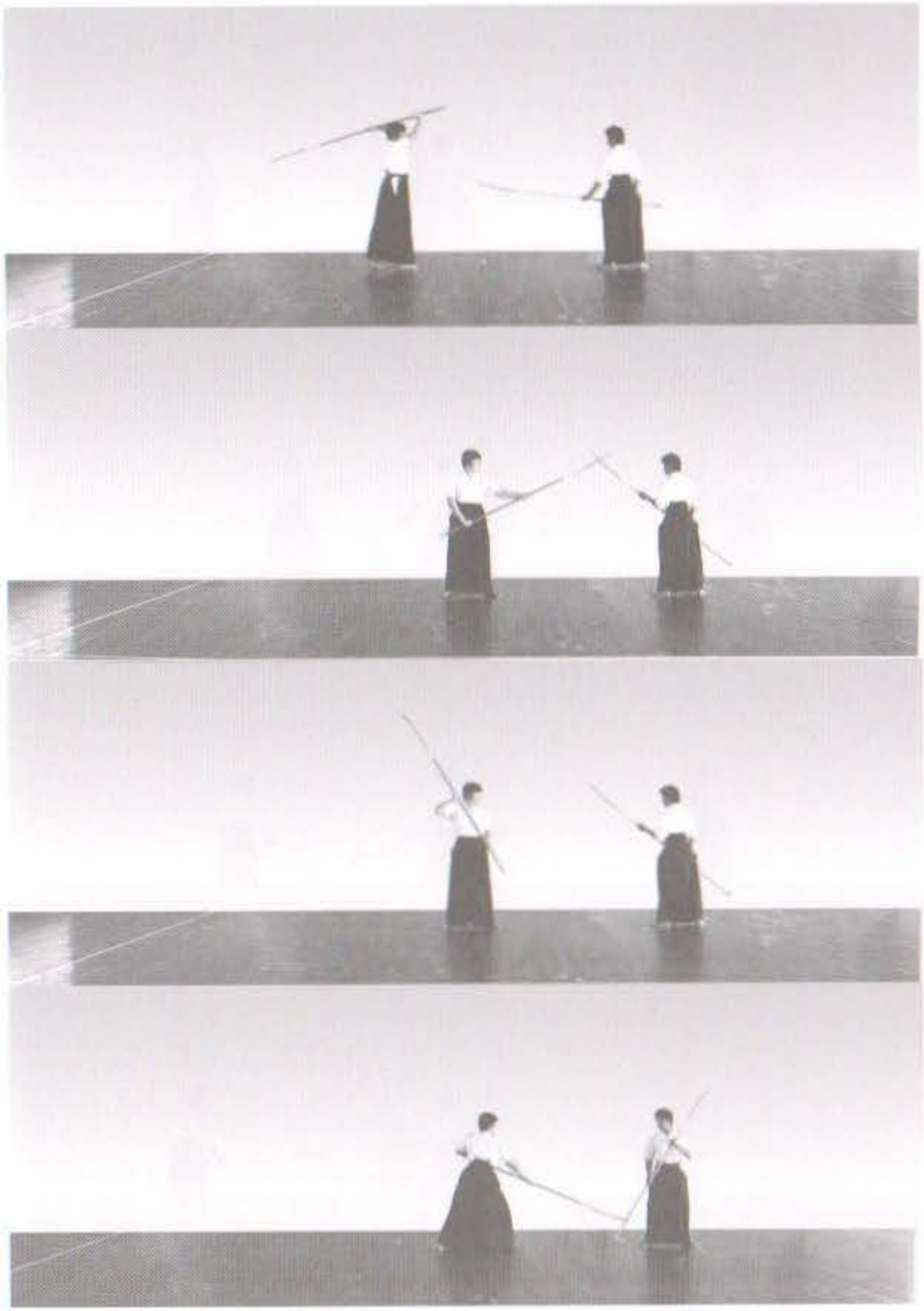
The second part of this chapter will introduce the sequence of set movements called Shikake-Oji. Many of the techniques introduced so far are found in Shikake-Oji, and it provides an effective way of learning all of the basic movements and *waza* which can be utilised in matches. It is easier to learn techniques without wearing *bogu* as it allows you to take your time and acquire proficiency in the movements. It is important that the practitioner learn the basic techniques of Naginata in accordance with the prescribed *kihon* methodology from the start lest they develop bad habits which become increasingly difficult to fix.

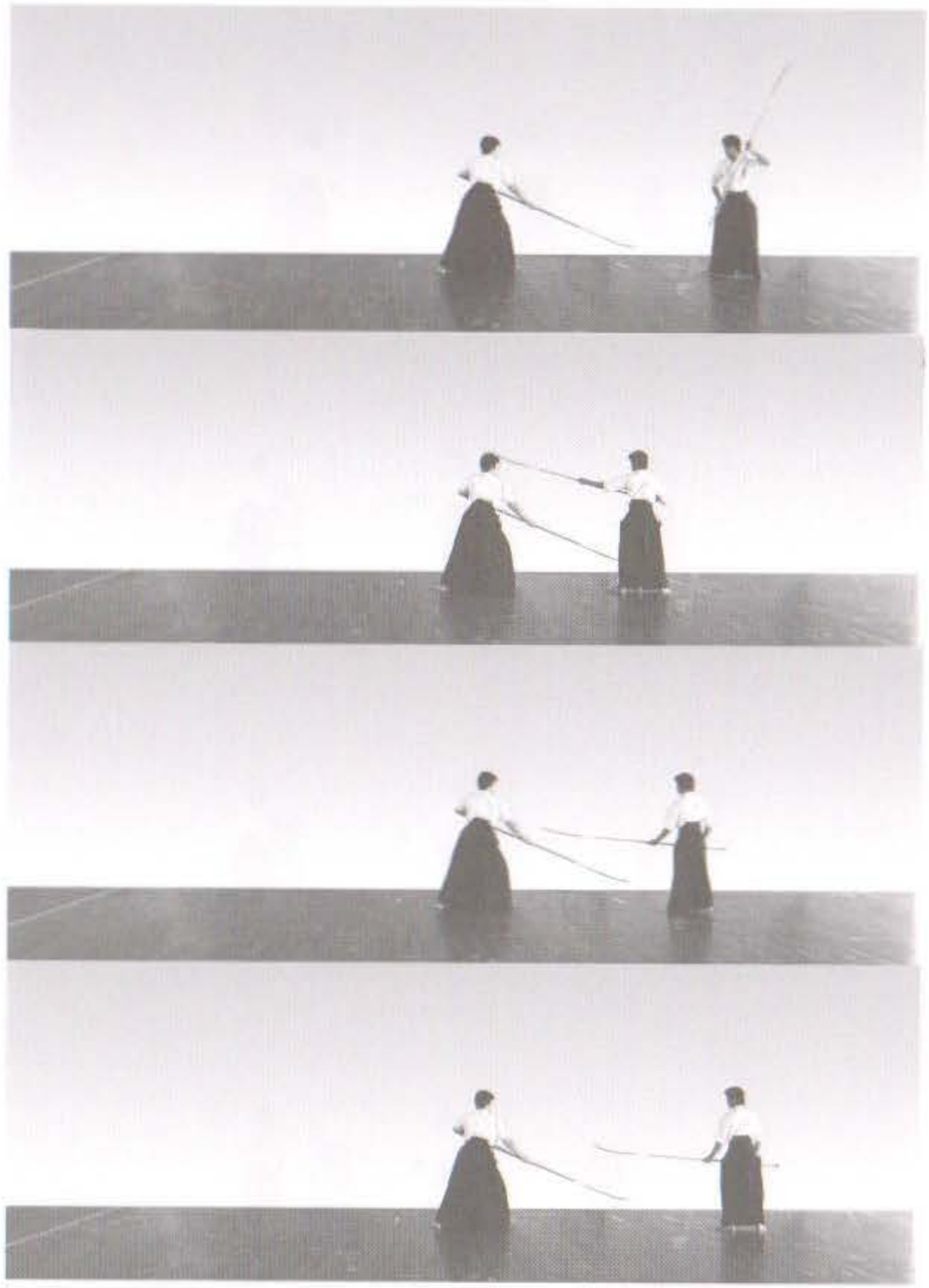
Shikake-Oji

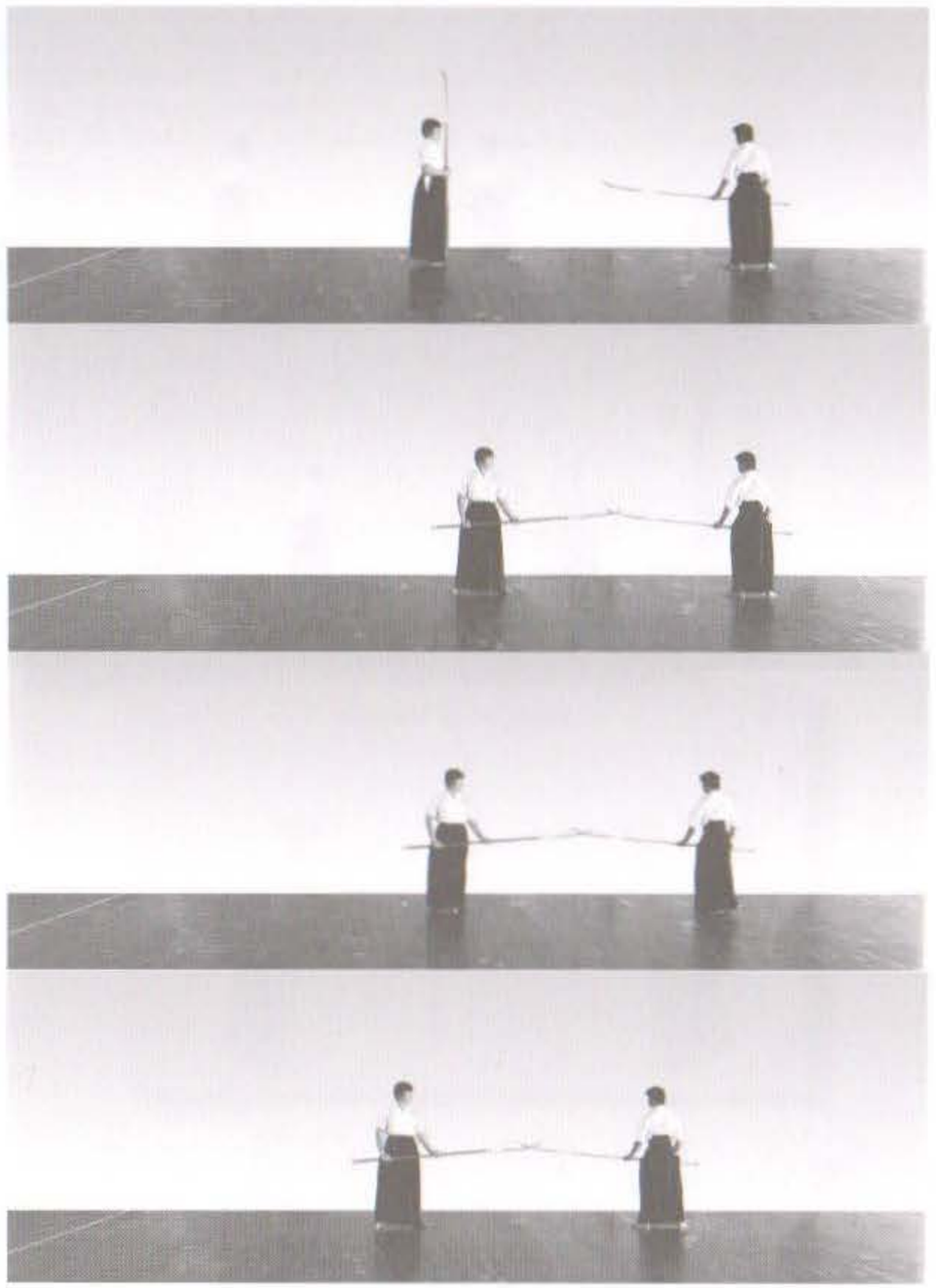
一本目

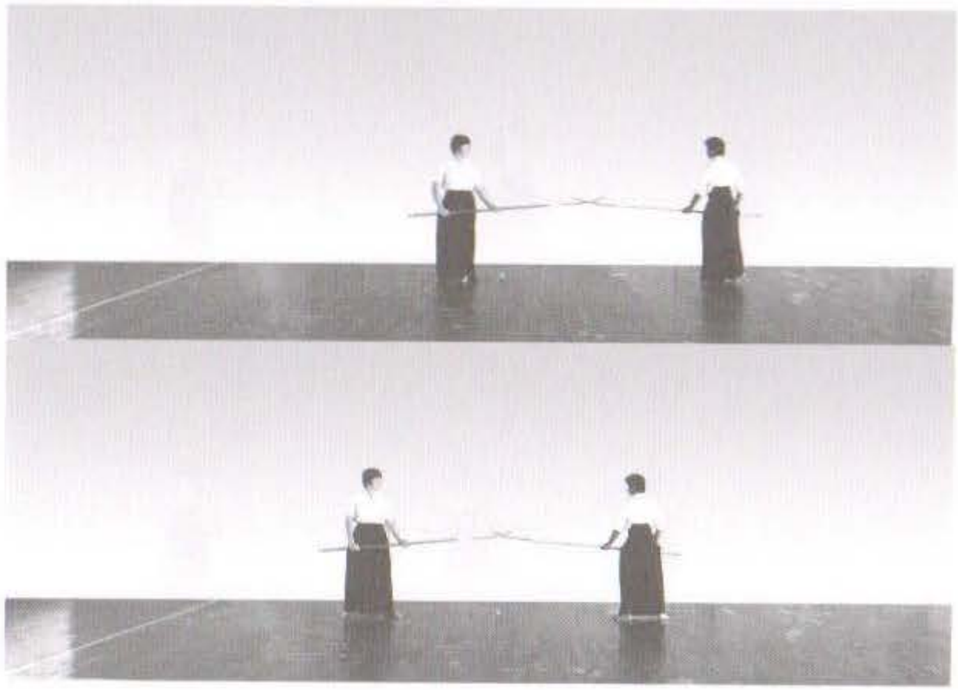
Part 1: Ippon-me





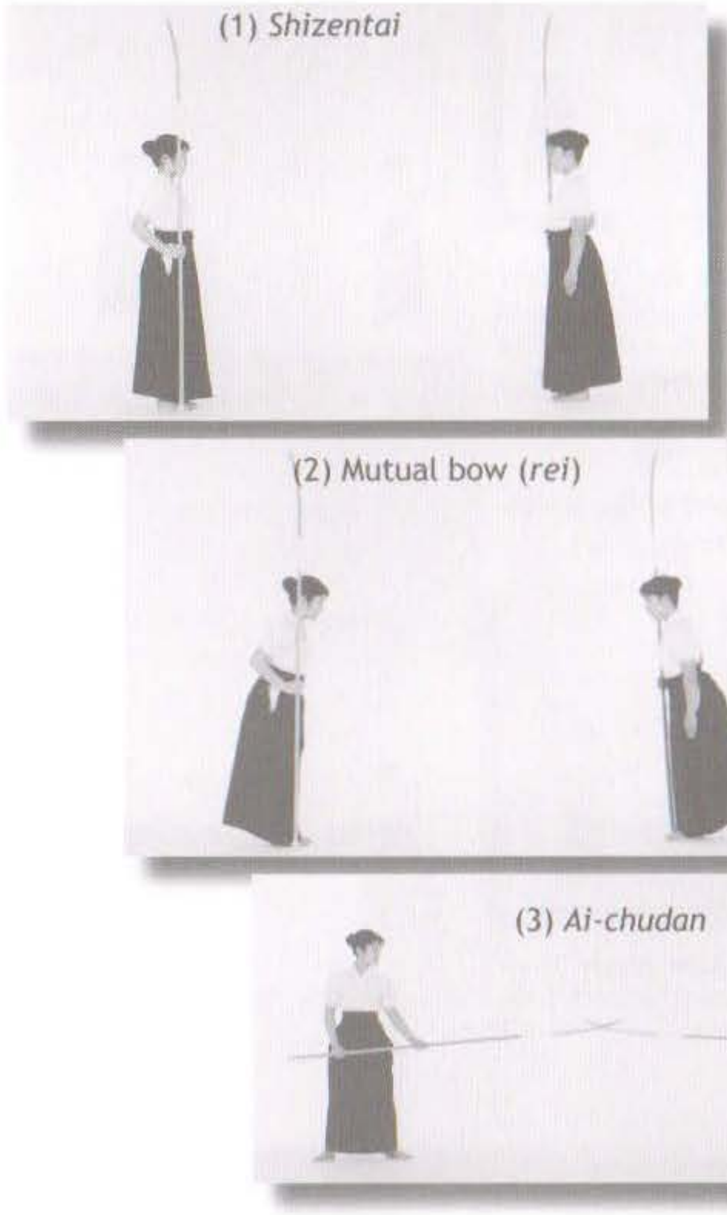






Up until now, all of the lessons in this book have been concerned with the basic (*kihon*) movements and various techniques (*waza*) used in Naginata. These are combined and practised in set patterns called Shikake-Oji. By practicing Shikake-Oji in pairs, you are able to learn correct etiquette, *kamae* (stances), grip, footwork and body movement, *ma-ai* (distance), breathing technique, striking chances, *zanshin* (mental and physical state of alertness), correct posture and so on. Shikake-Oji is also a competition event in Engi-kyogi.

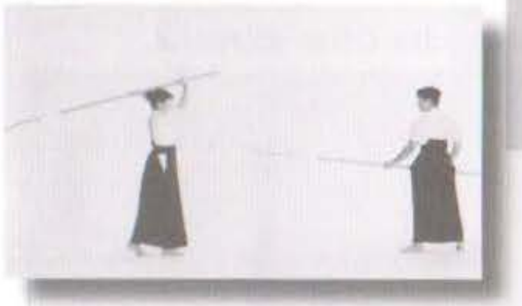
Always start and finish the set of Shikake-Oji in *shizentai*.



Shikake

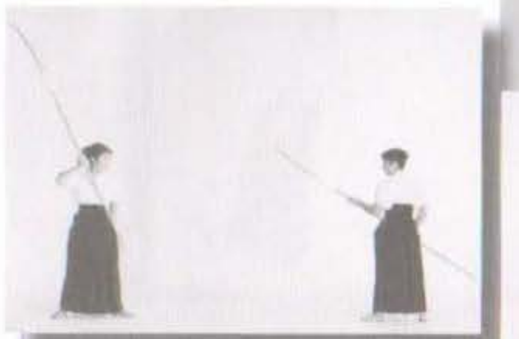
From *ai-chudan*

(1) Strike *furiage-men*.
(Shout *men*)



Step through from your back foot (right) as you lift the naginata overhead, then step out with the left foot to strike men.

(2) *Mochikae* and strike *sune*.
(Shout *sune*).



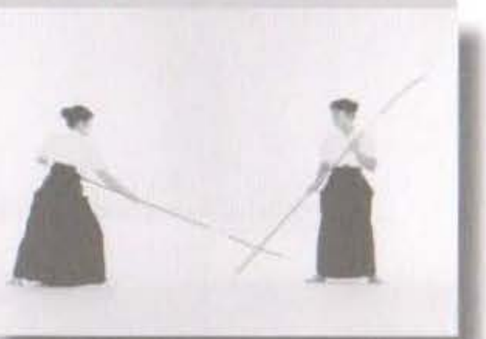
Mochikae and assume hasso. Then step through from the back foot (right) strike sune.

Oji

(1)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Step back with okuri-ashi and block men with the ha-bu.

(2)' Block with the *e-bu*.

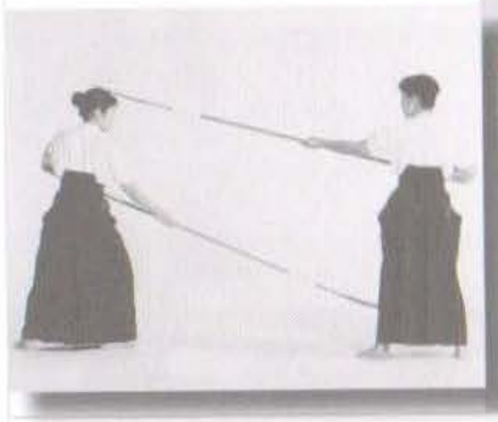


Stepping back, block sune with the e-bu.

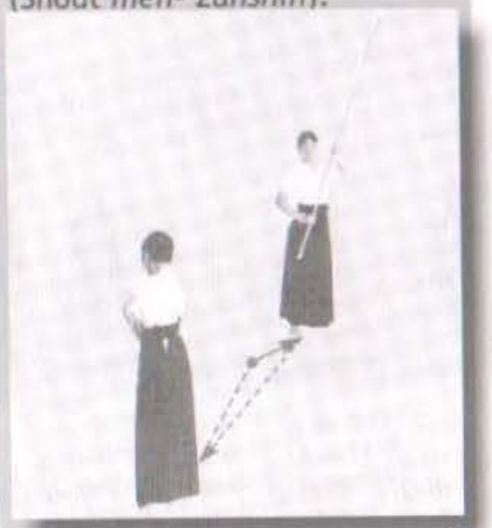
(3) Remain in this position, but keep focused on Oji. (*Zanshin*).

Oji assumes hasso while stepping back diagonally to the left.

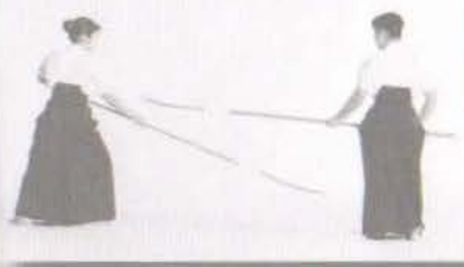
Pivoting on the front foot (right) Oji steps through with the left foot and strikes sokumen.



(3)' Assume *hasso* while stepping diagonally back, and then move in to strike *sokumen*.
(Shout *men- Zanshin*).

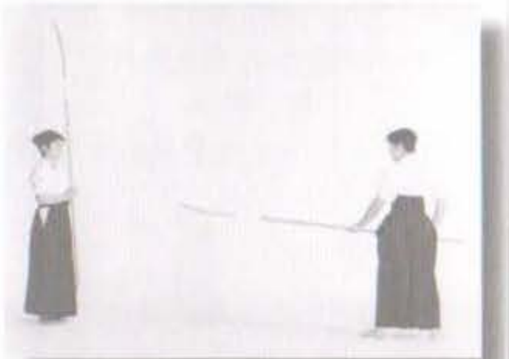


(4) Return to *chudan*.



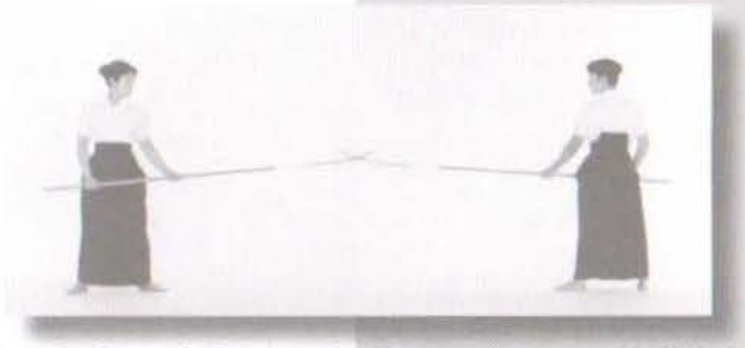
Oji assumes chudan while retreating from the front foot (left) first and then the right.

(5) Return to *chudan*.



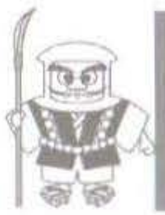
Shikake draws their front foot (right) back to the left and brings hands together while facing Oji, then steps out with the left foot into chudan.

(6) Return to original positions.



Without relaxing their guard, Shikake moves back in time with Oji with ayumi-ashi to the starting position. (Left, right, left, right).

Keeping in time with Shikake, Oji advances forward to the starting position with ayumi-ashi (Right, left, right, left).

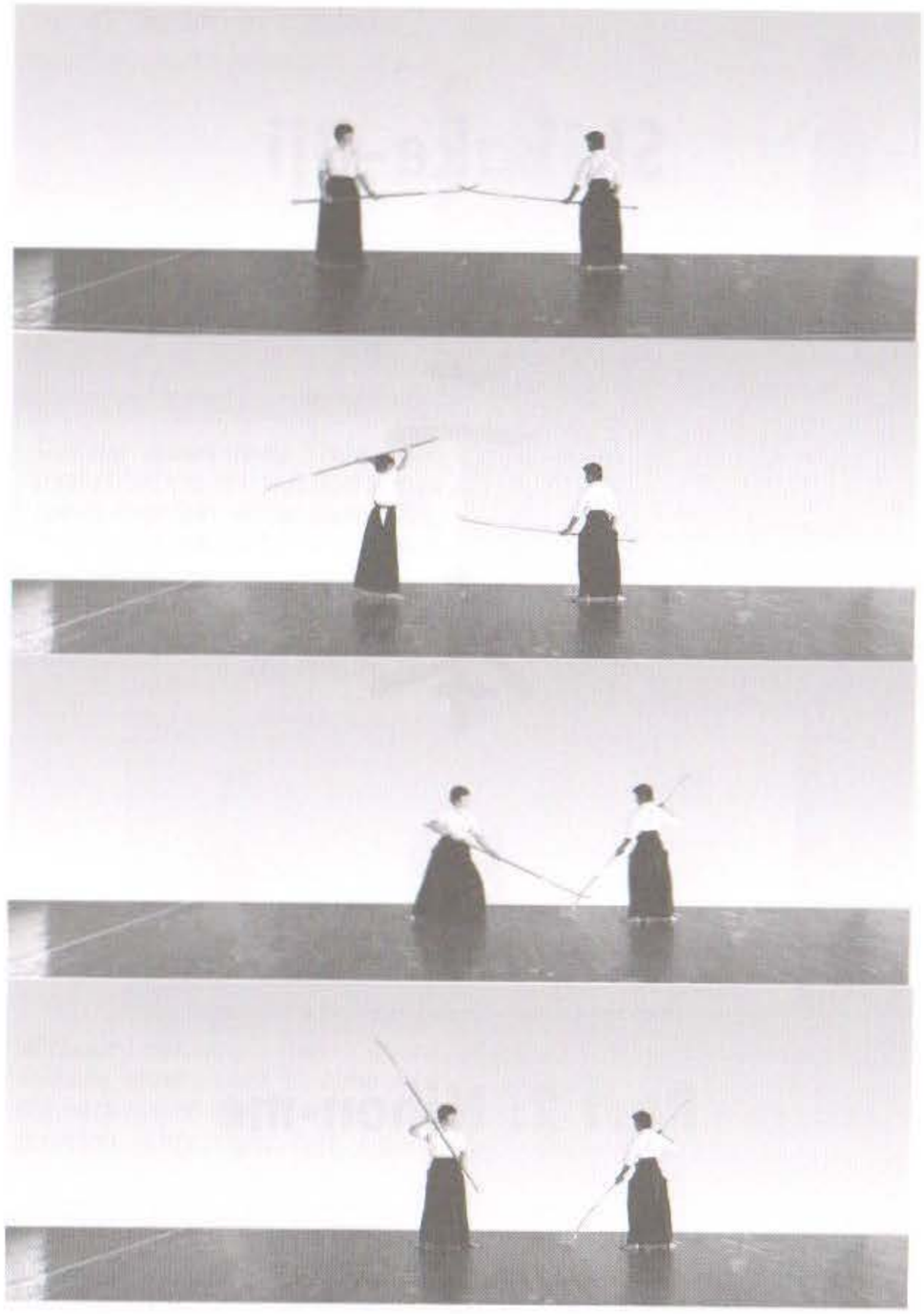


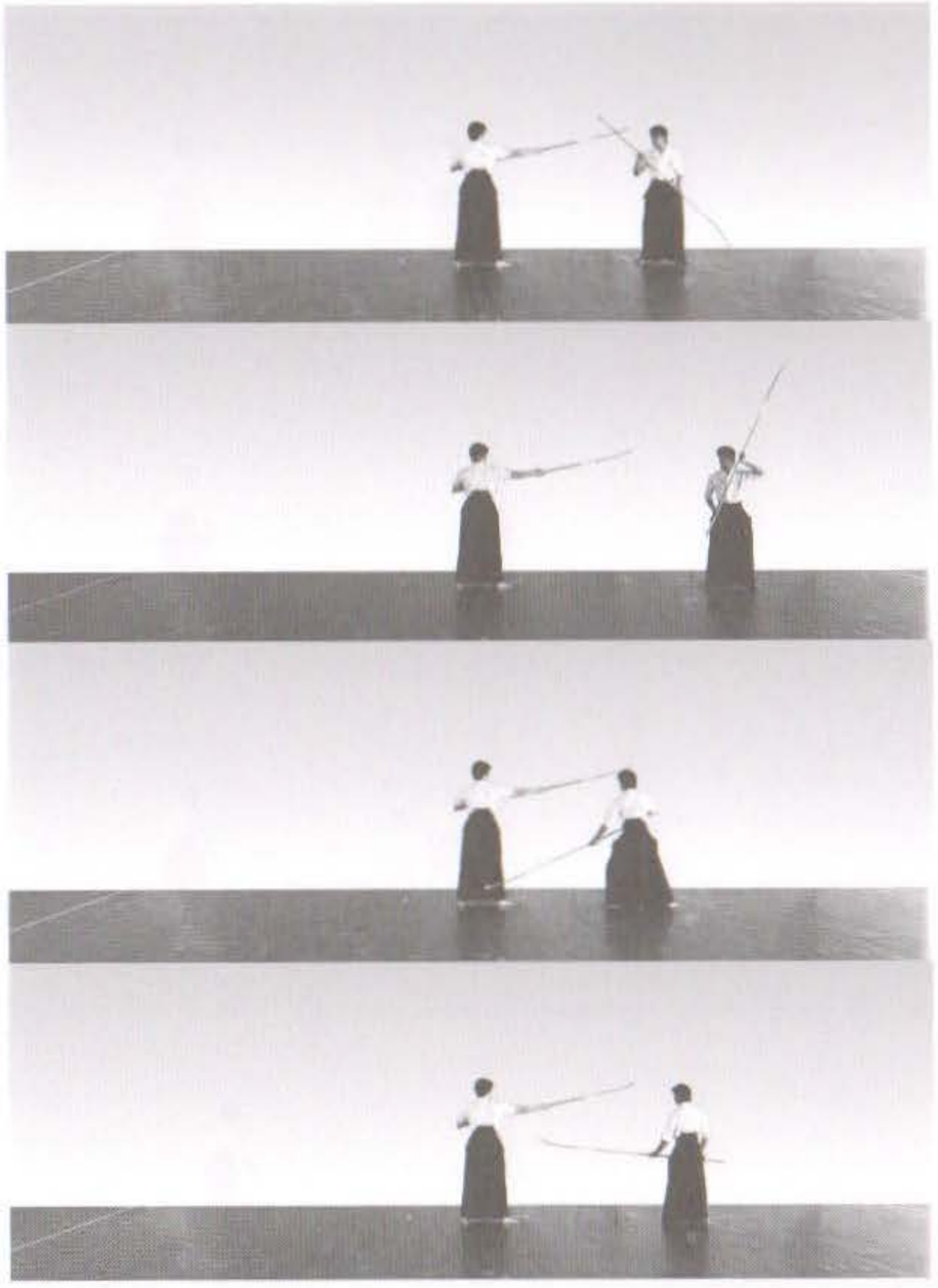
Important Points:
When receiving Shikake's attacks, Oji should wait until the last possible moment before reacting. Also, when executing blocks or attacks, the *naginata* and body should move in unison.

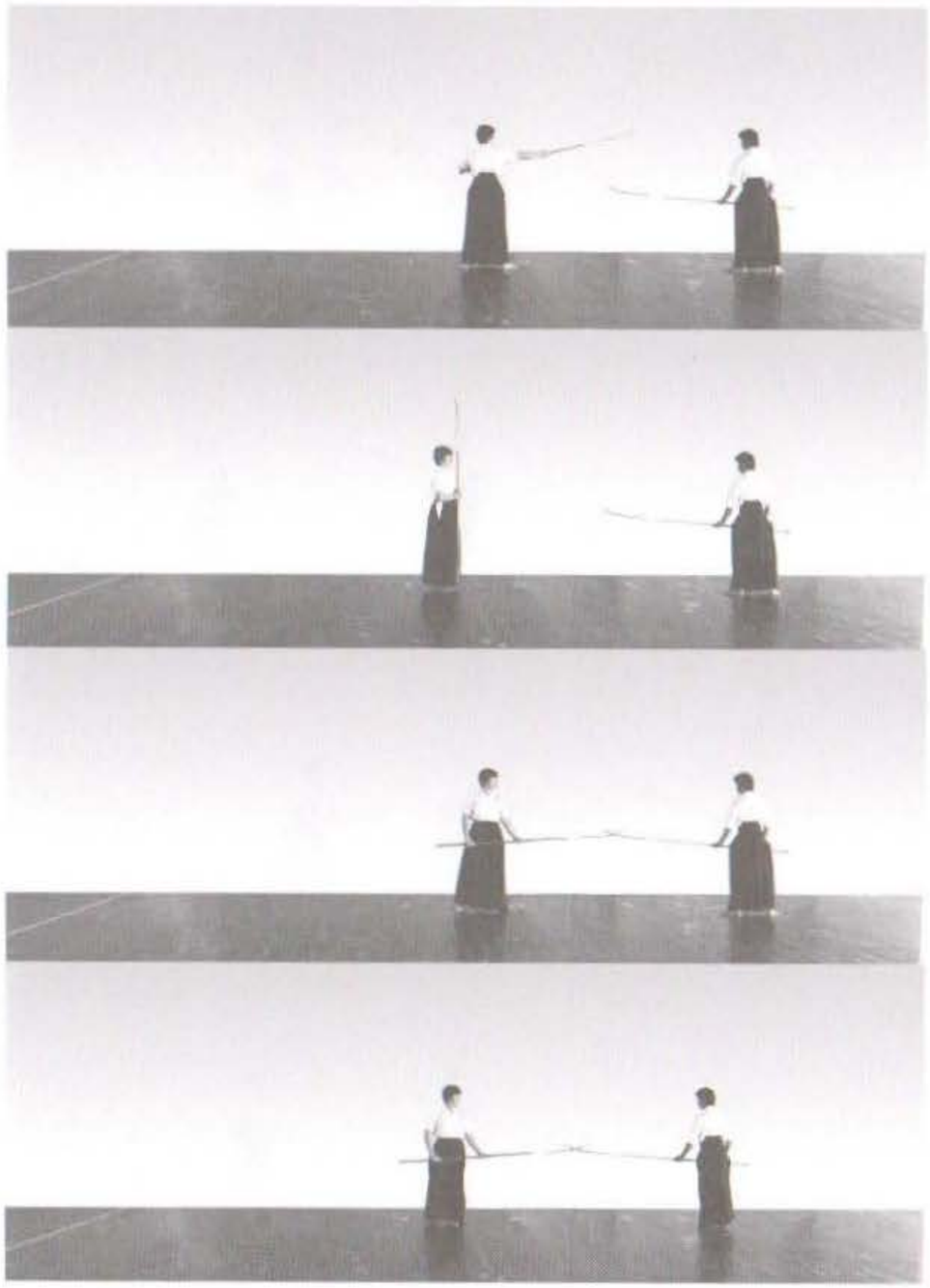
Shikake-Oji

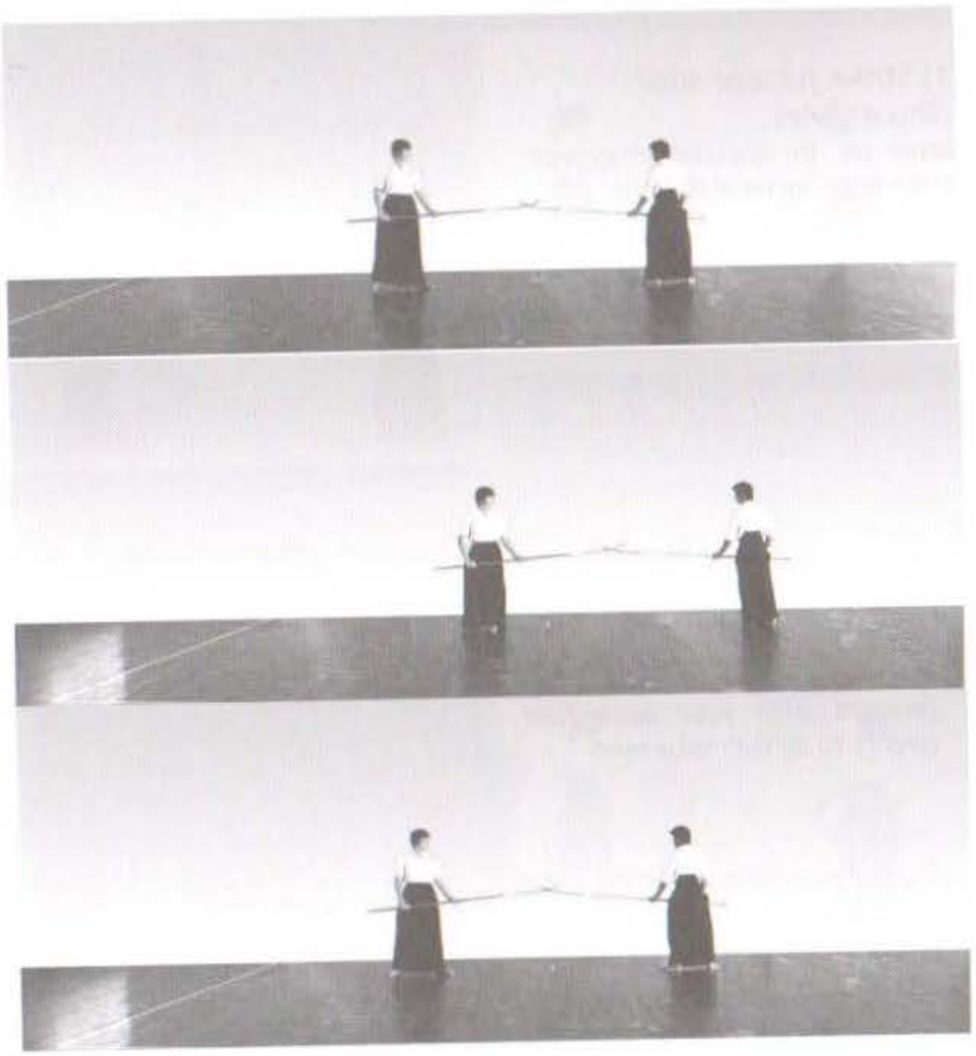
二本目

Part 2: Nihon-me









Shikake

From *ai-chudan*

(1) Strike *furiage-sune*. (Shout *sune*).

Same as in ippon-me except strike sune instead of men.

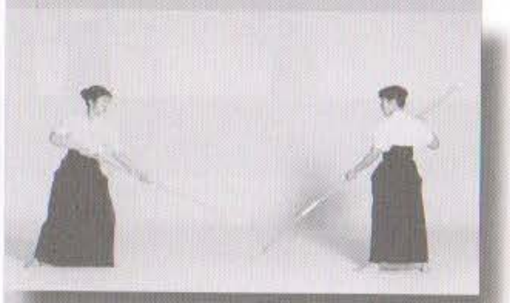
(2) *Mochikae* and strike *soku-men*. (Shout *men*).

Mochikae into hasso and step forward with your back foot (right) to strike soku-men.

(3) Stay in this position, but keep alert and maintain eye-contact. (*Zanshin*).

Oji

(1)' Block with the *ha-bu*.



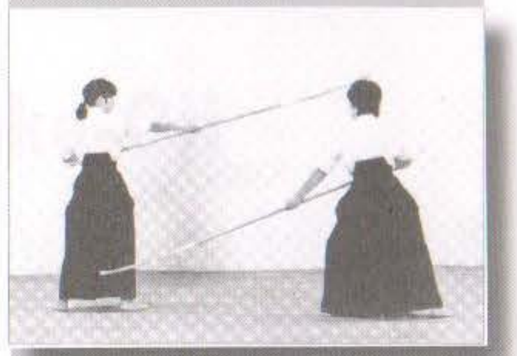
Move back with okuri-ashi as you block sune with the ha-bu.

(2)' Block with the *e-bu*.

(3)' Step back to the diagonal rear and assume *hasso*, and then move forward again to strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

Shikake

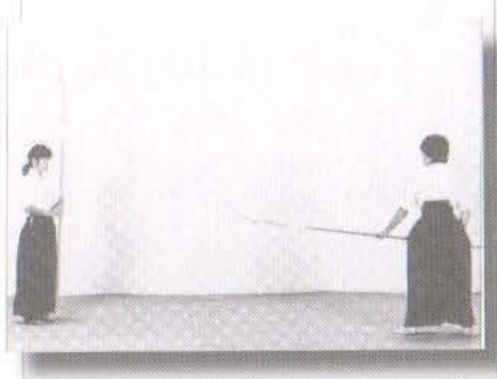
Oji



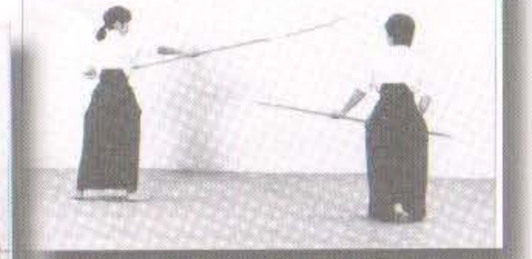
Pivoting on the right foot, Oji steps through with the left and strikes sune.

(4) Return to *chudan*.

(5) Return to *chudan*.



Draw the right foot back even with the left as both hands come together in front of the body. Then step out with the left foot into chudan.



Retreat into chudan moving from the front foot first.

(6) Return together to original positions.

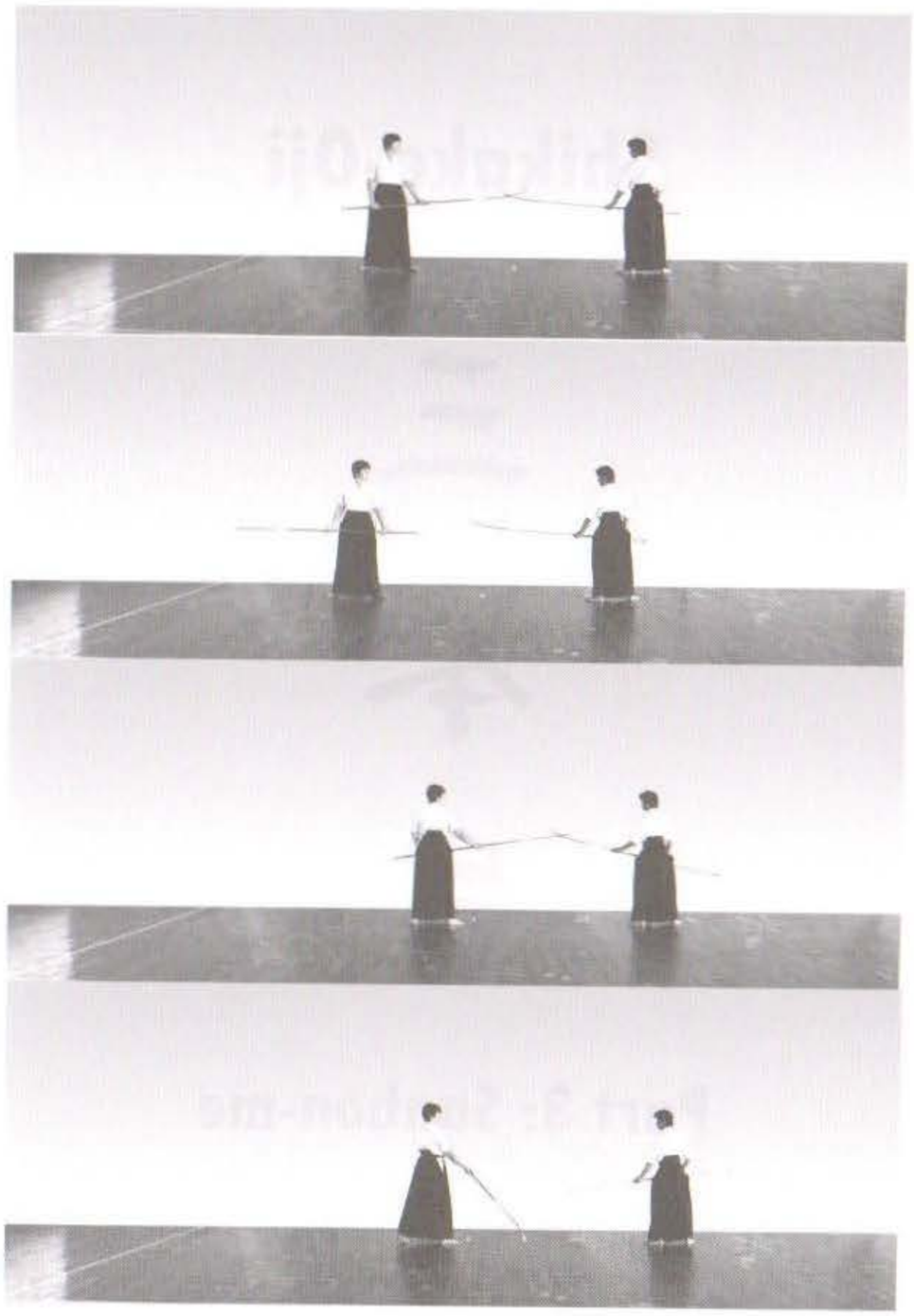
Keep alert while moving back in ayumi-ashi (left, right, left, right).

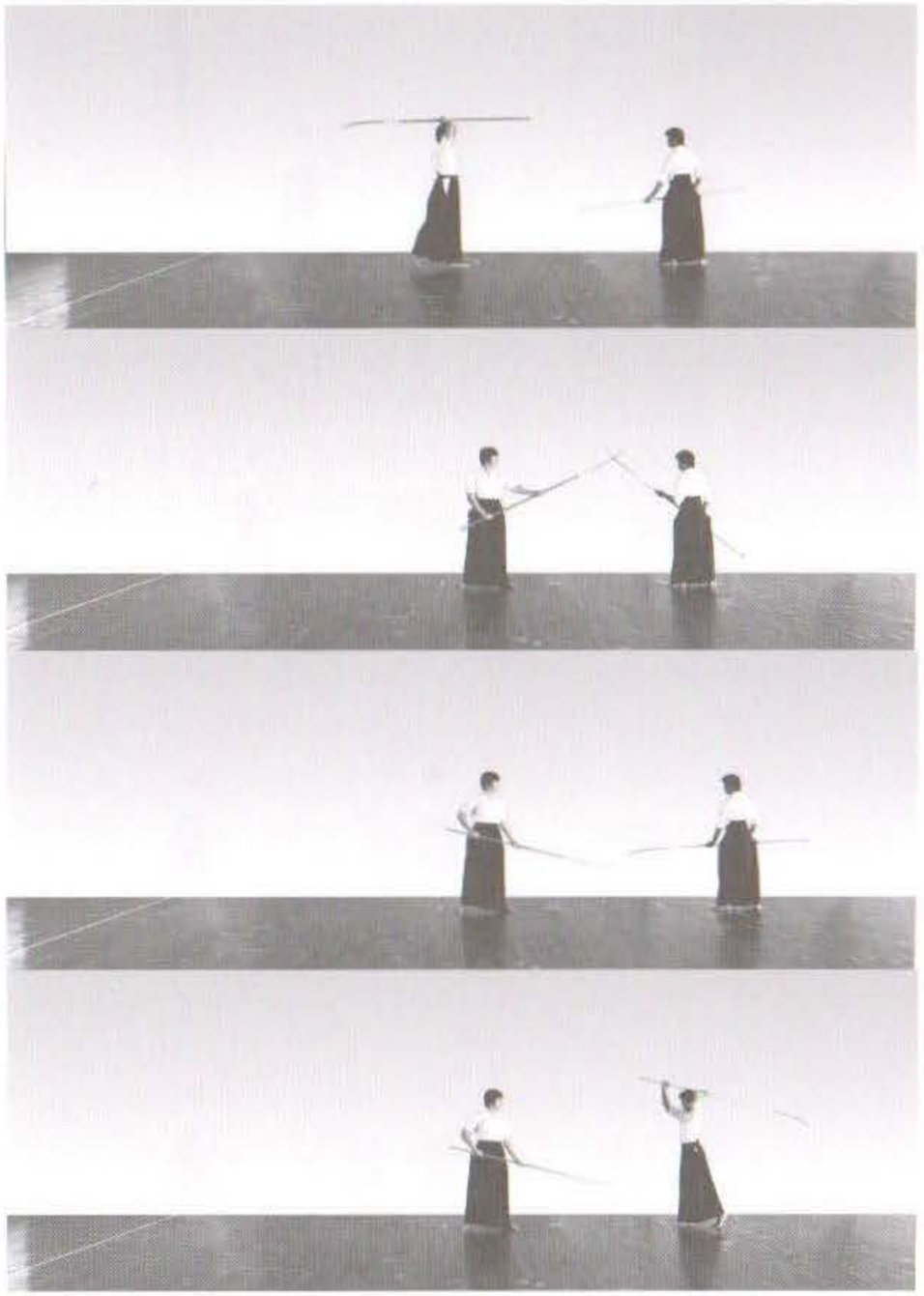
Move forward in ayumi-ashi (right. left, right, left).

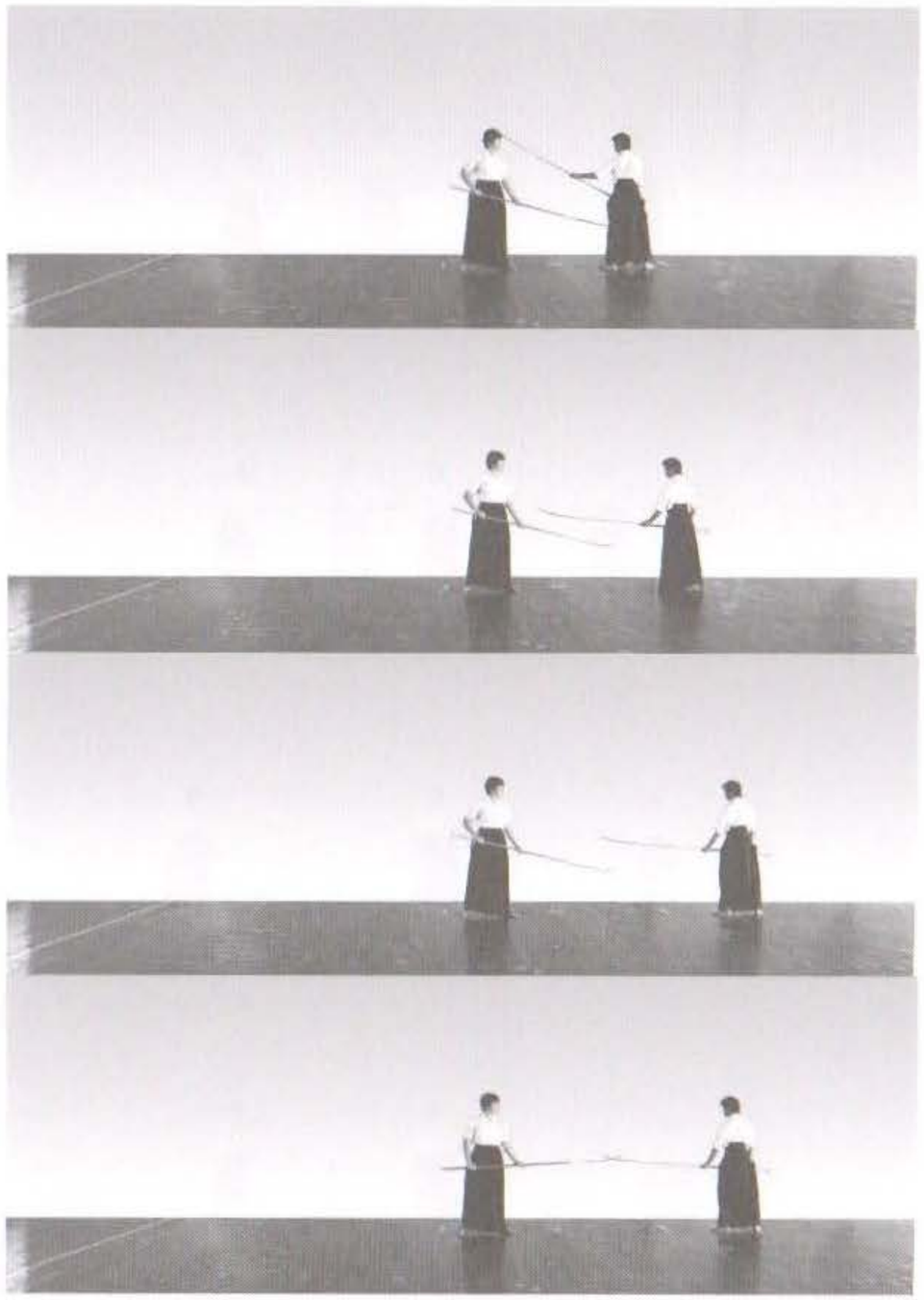
Shikake-Oji

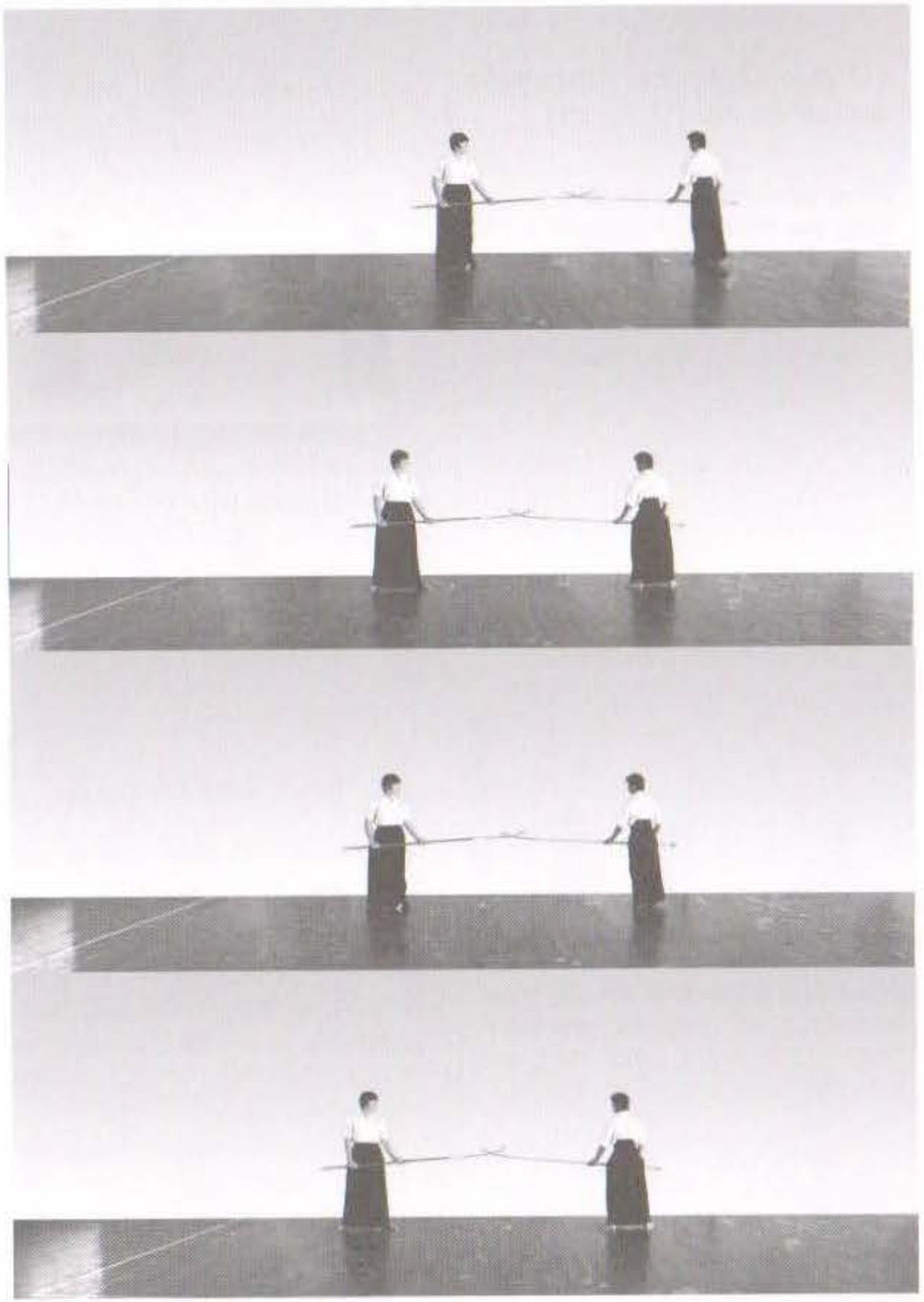
三本目

Part 3: Sanbon-me









Shikake

From *ai-chudan*

(1) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae* and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).

From wakigamae step forward with the right foot and strike do.

(3) Strike *furikaeshi-men*. (Shout *men- Zanshin*).

Utilising the power from the harai technique, spin the naginata overhead (furikaeshi), and step out with the left foot to strike men.

When your naginata is rendered ineffective with makiotoshi, the back hand (right) should maintain contact with the body, and the front hand should grip the naginata lightly, allowing it to slide.

Oji

(1)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Step back with okuri-ashi and block with the ha-bu.

(2) Take one more step back in *okuri-ashi* and flick Shikake's *naginata* down (*harai*).

(3)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Move back with okuri-ashi as you block men with the ha-bu.

(4) Move back again with *okuri-ashi* while flicking Shikake's *naginata* down to the right with *makiotoshi*.

Shikake

Lift the kissaki up to assume chudan.

Oji

(5) After executing *maki-otoshi* move forward and strike *furiage-men*. (Shout *men- Zanshin*).

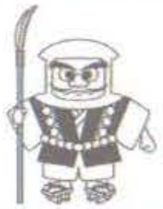
Stepping forward from the back foot (right) extend the naginata out (kuridashi) and lift it overhead (furiage), then strike men stepping through with the left foot.

(6) Return to *chudan*.

Assume chudan while retreating from the front foot (left) then the right.

(7) Return together to original positions.

Keep alert while moving back in ayumi-ashi (left, right, left right).

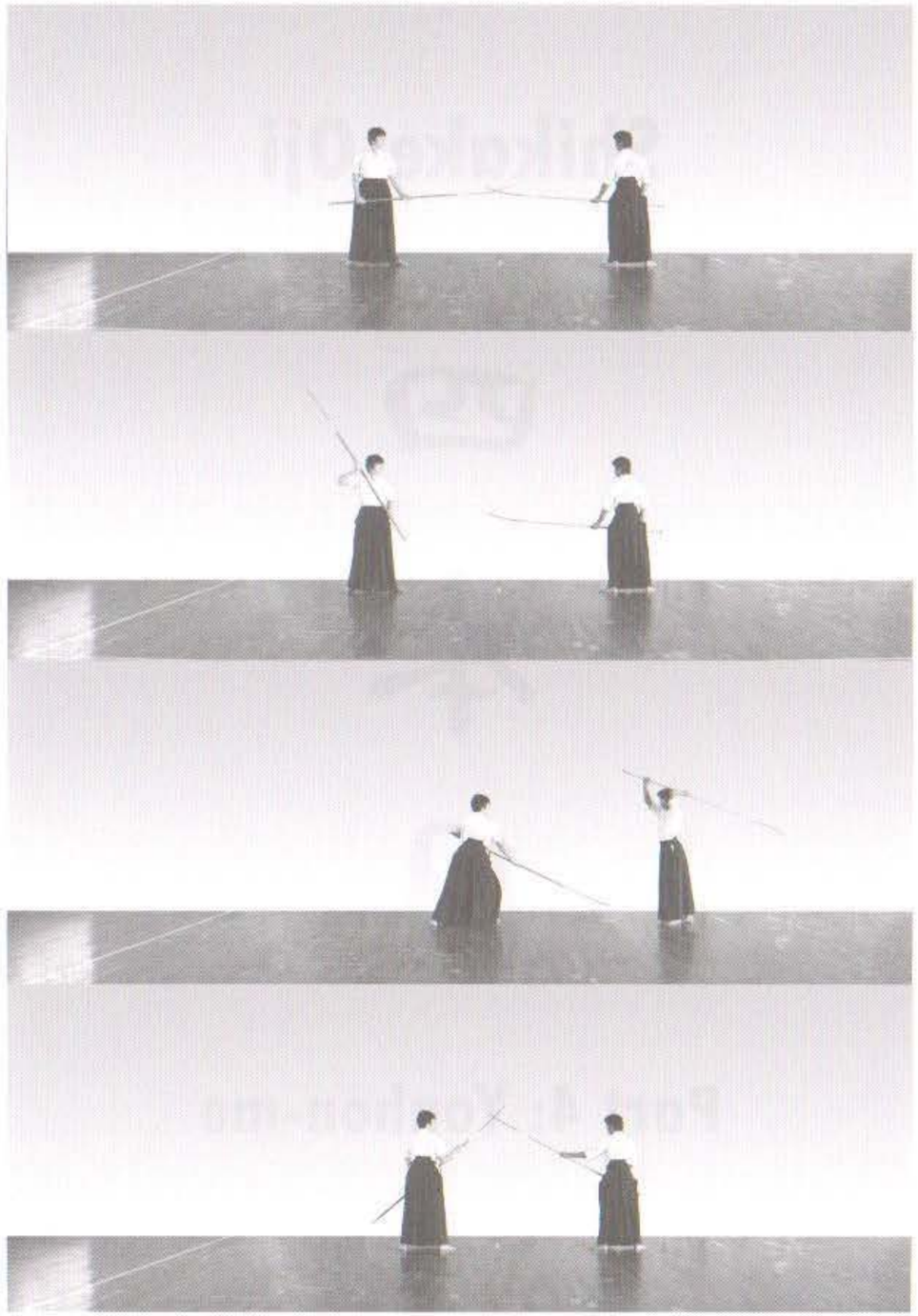


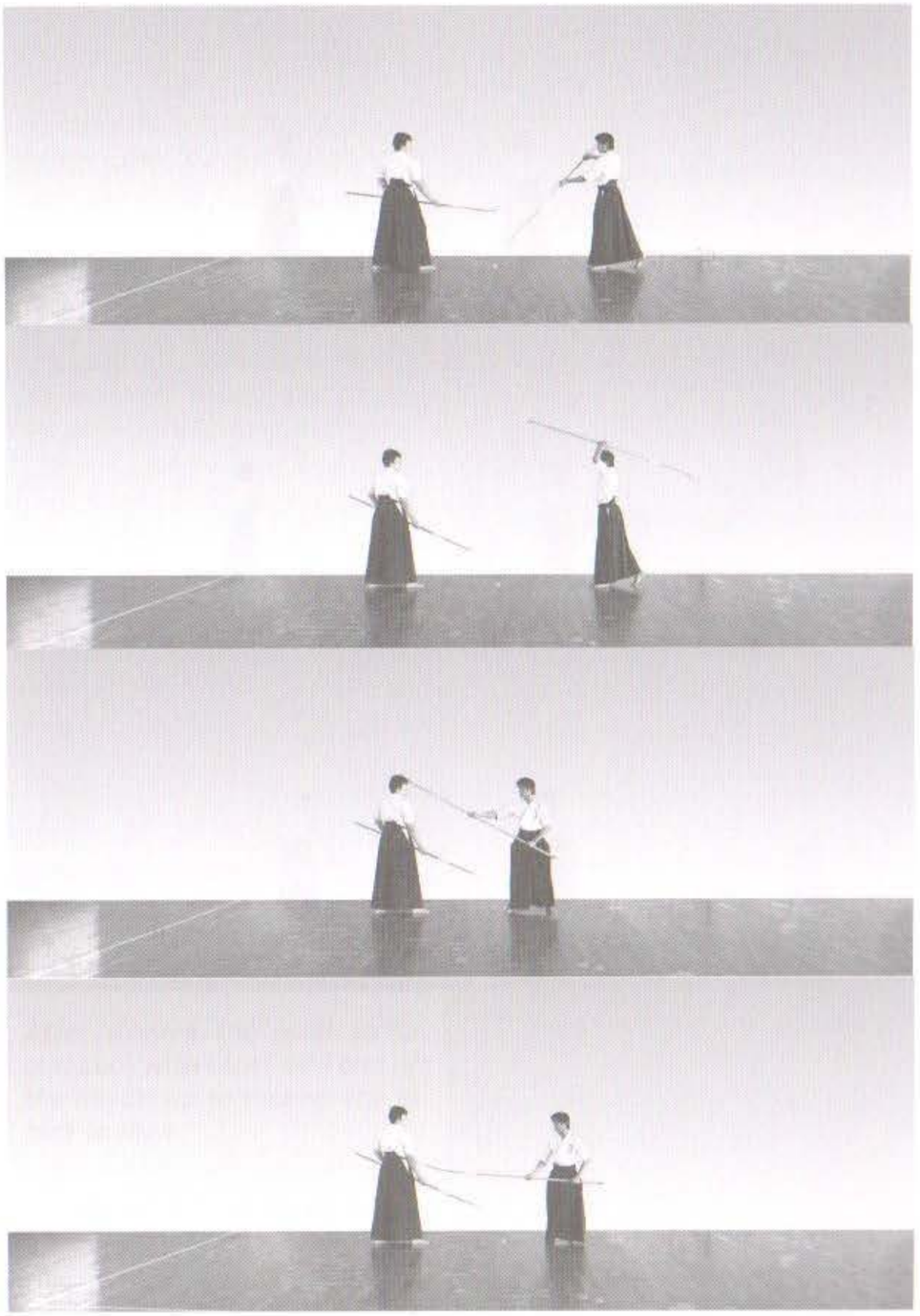
Move forward in ayumi-ashi (right. left, right, left).

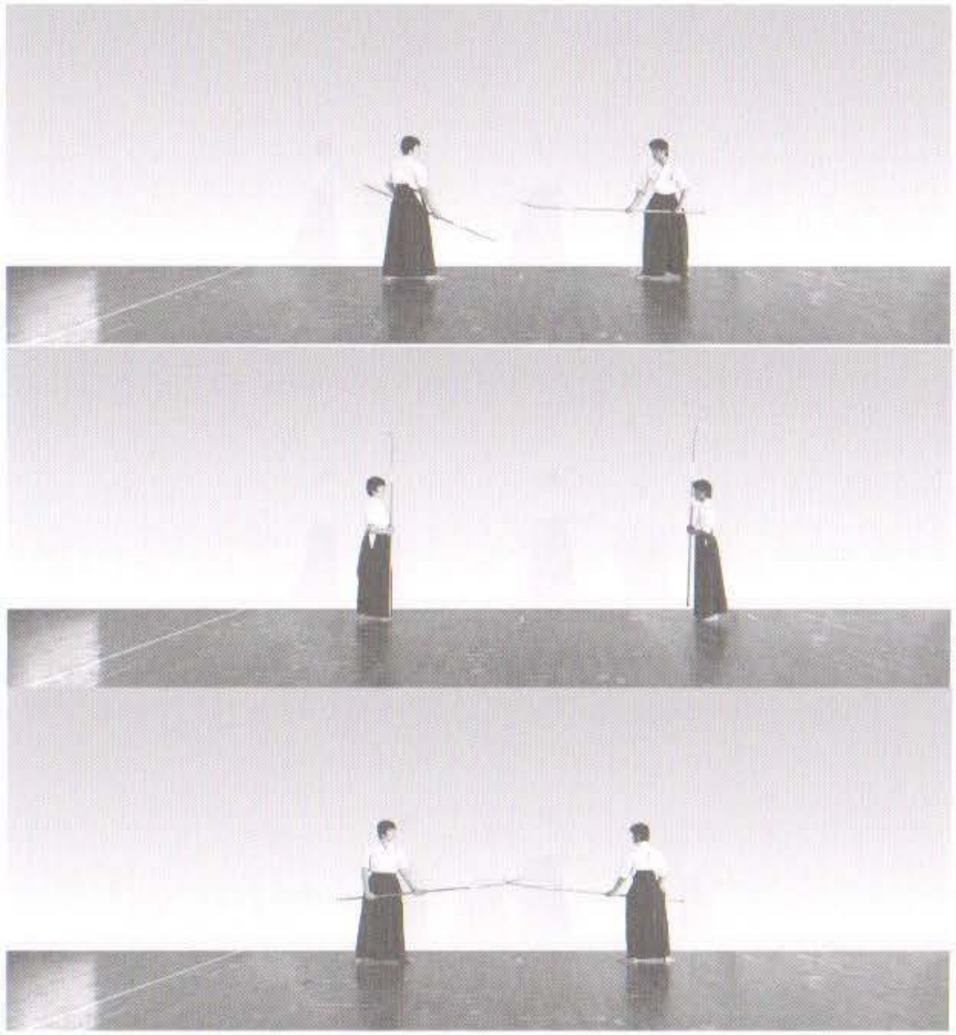
Important Points:
Make sure the *do* cuts are not too high.
Block *do* properly before executing the *harai*.
The *harai* and *makiotoshi* do not require much strength.

Shikake-Oji

Part 4: Yonhon-me





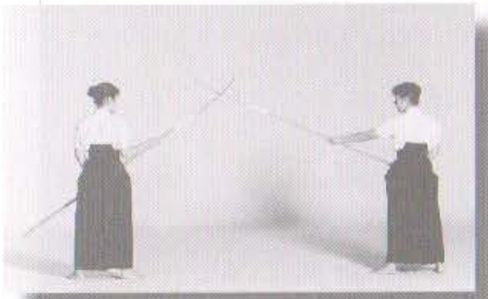


Shikake

From *ai-chudan*

(1) Mochikae into *hasso* and strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

From hasso step forward from the right foot and attempt to strike sune. The strike will be dodged, so the kissaki should continue to its momentum and cut through the point where sune was.



(2)' Step back with *okuri-ashi* and block with the *ha-bu*.

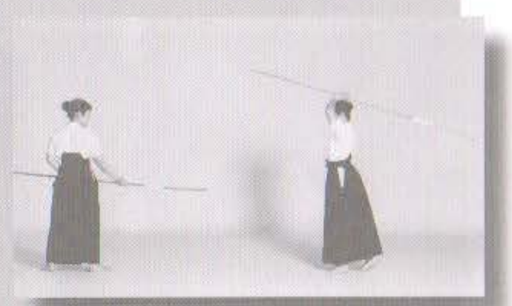
After missing the sune strike, pull back with okuri-ashi and lift the kissaki up to receive the attack to men.

(3) Move back with *okuri-ashi* as you flick Oji's *naginata* to the left (*harai*).

Oji

(1)' Lift the *naginata* overhead and dodge the *sune* strike.

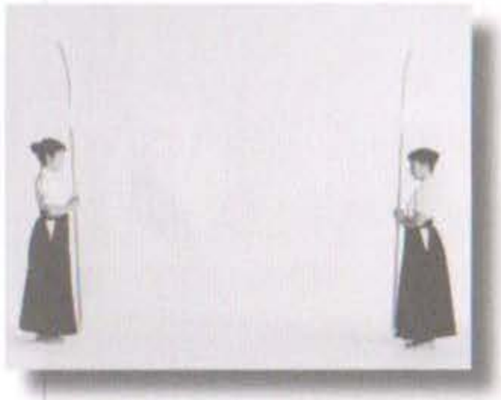
Step back with okuri-ashi to dodge the sune attack (nuki) as the naginata is lifted overhead. The hips should be facing forwards.

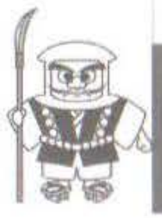


(2) Step forward and strike *men*.

After dodging sune, step forward immediately and strike men.

(3)' Strike *furikaeshi-men*. (Shout *men- Zanshin*).

Shikake	Oji
Stay in this position and maintain eye-contact.	*Use the momentum of the harai to spin the naginata overhead (furikaeshi).*
	Step forward from the back (right) foot and strike men.
(4) Return to *chudan*.	
	*Assume chudan while retreating from the front foot (right) then the left.*
	Draw the front (right) foot back, mochikae, then assume chudan.
Both mochikae and assume chudan together.	



Important Points:
Shikake must make a large attack actually aiming for *sune*.
The *harai* should not be executed with excessive power.

Shikake-Oji

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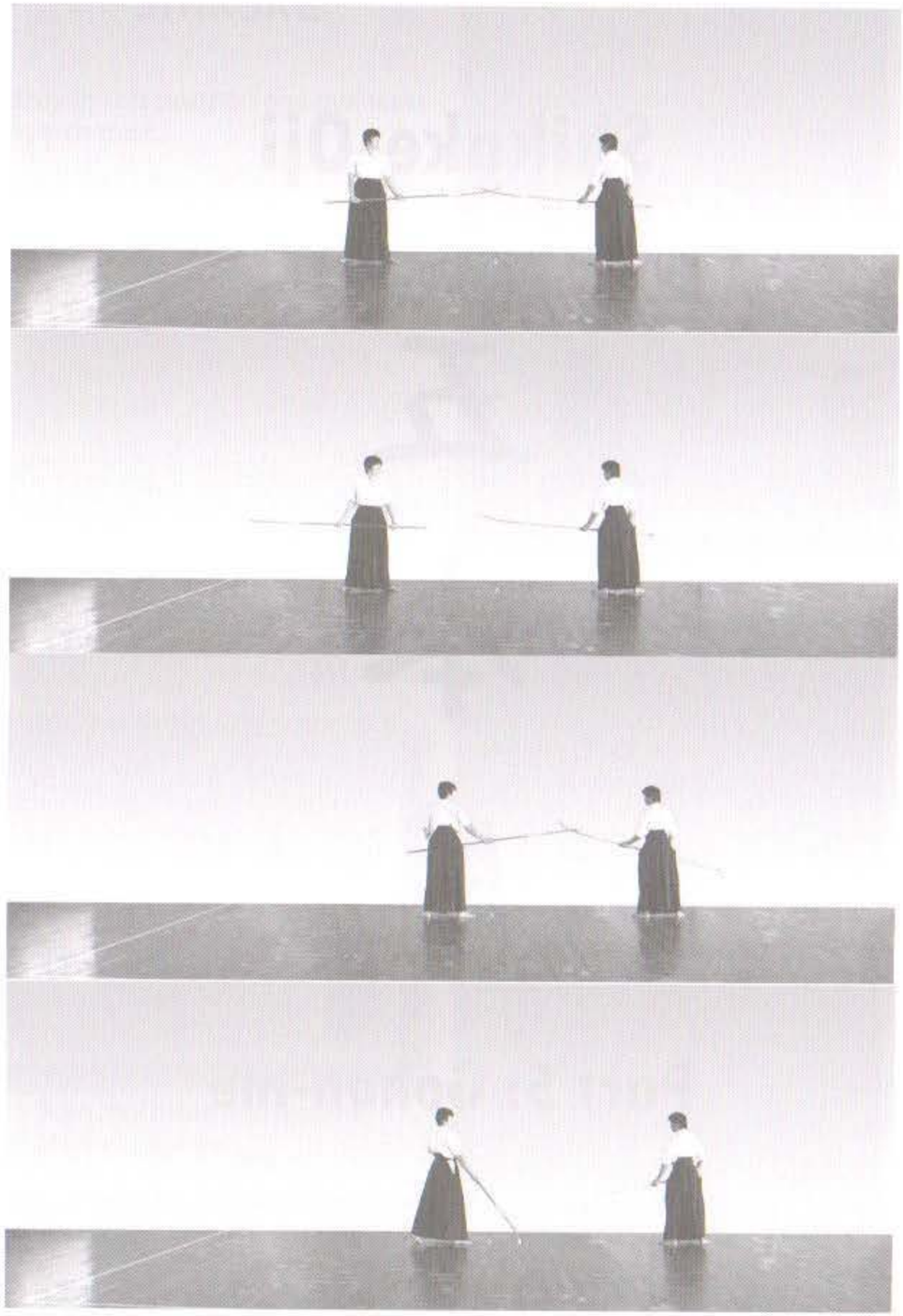
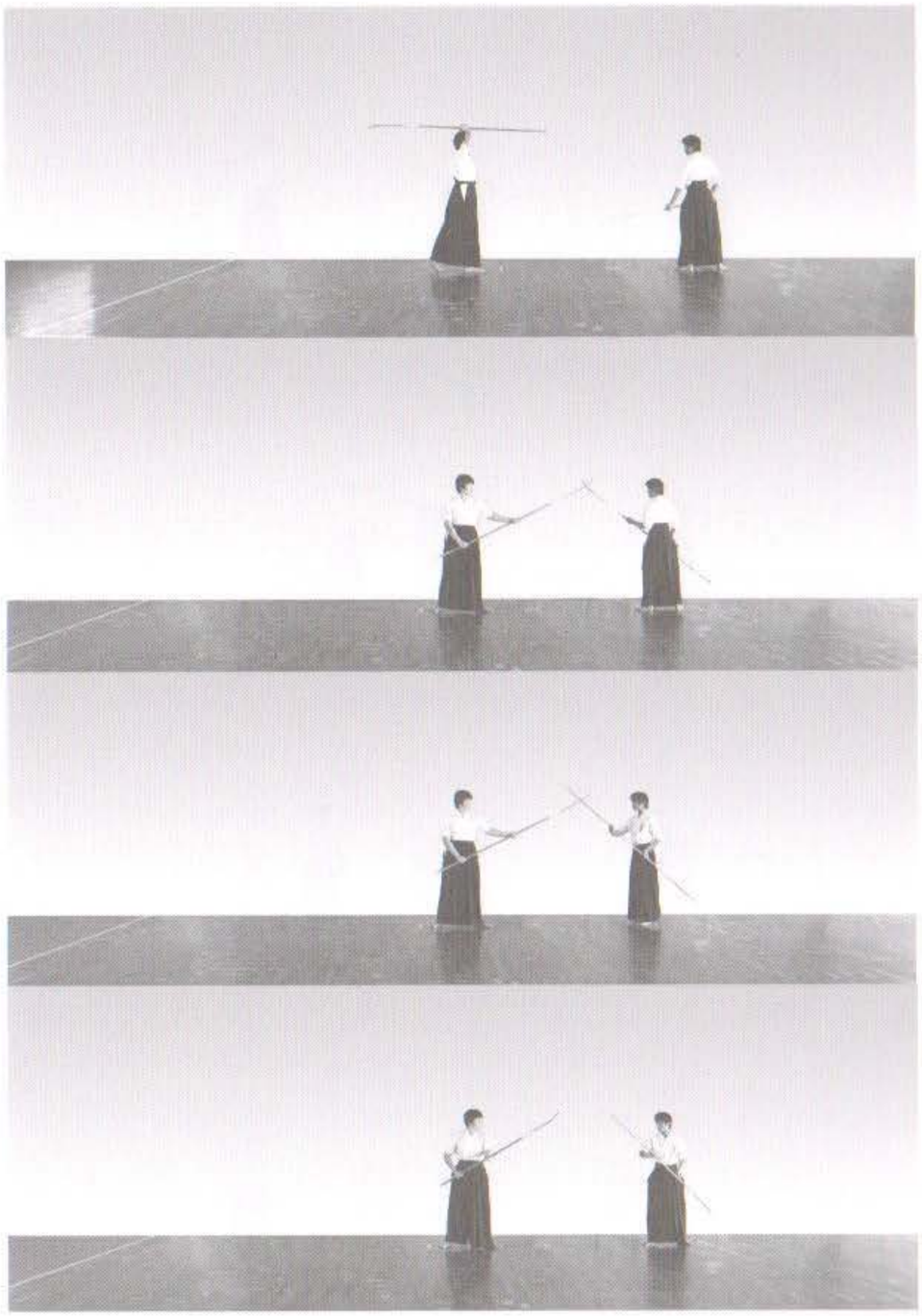
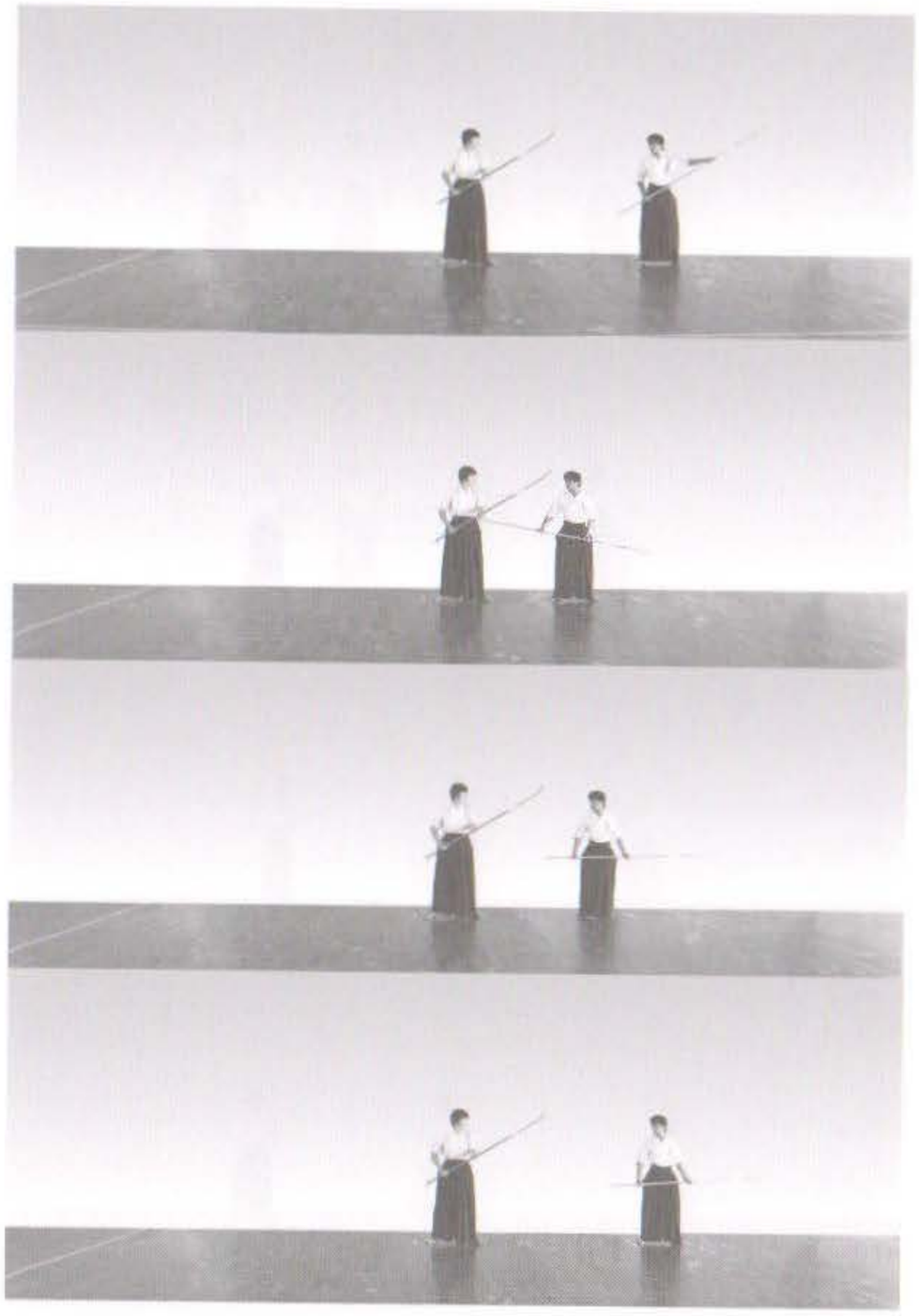
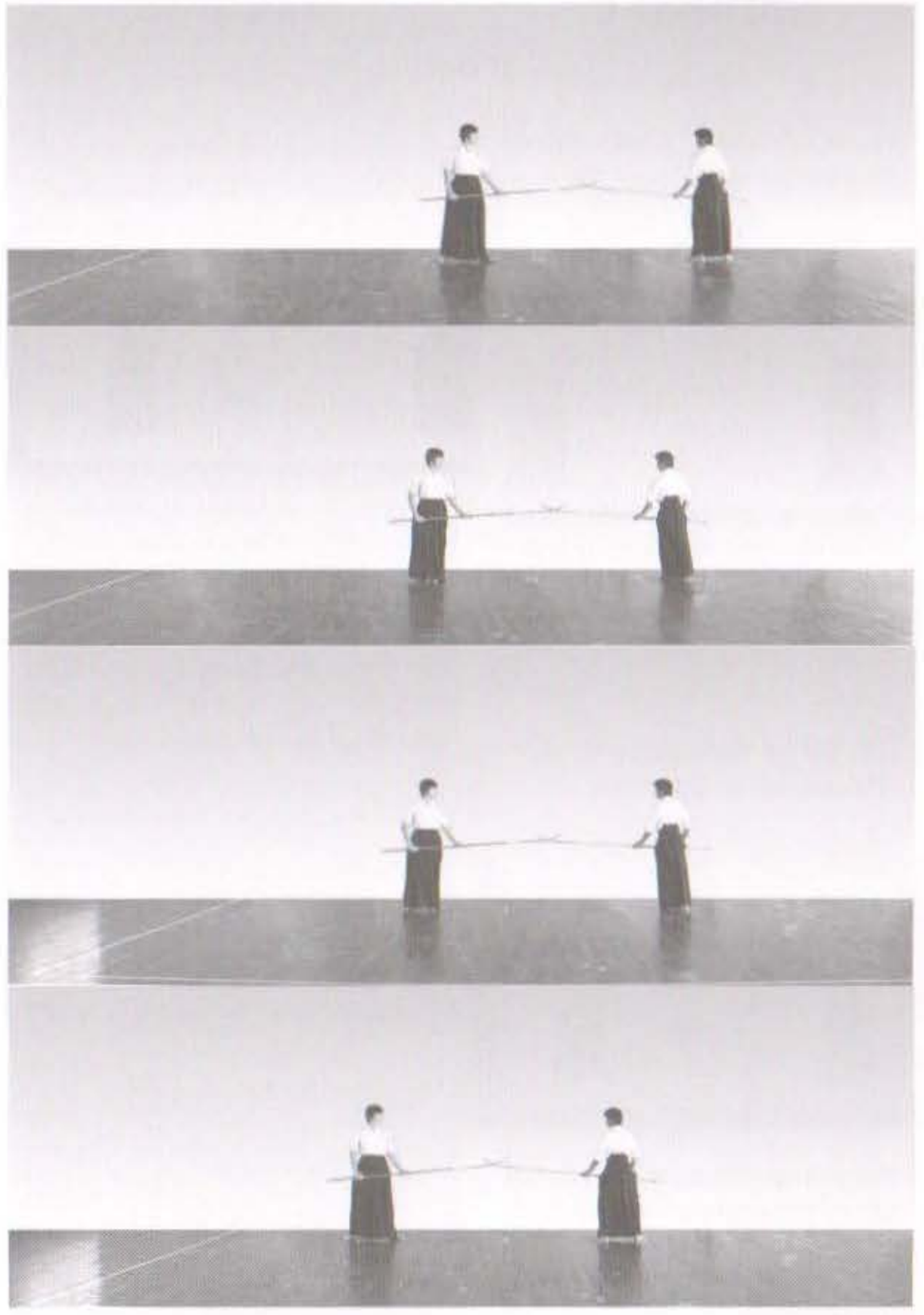
Part 5: Gohon-me









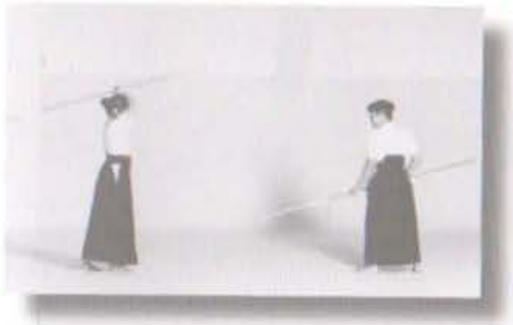
Shikake

From *ai-chudan*

(1) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae* and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).

From *wakigamae* step forward from the rear foot (right) and strike *do*.

(3) Strike *furikaeshi-men*. (Shout *men- Zanshin*).



Using the momentum of the harai, the naginata is spun overhead (furikaeshi), then strike men while stepping out with the left foot.

Oji

(1)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Step back with okuri-ashi and block do with the ha-bu.

(2) Oji steps back again while flicking Shikake's *naginata* down to the left (*harai*).

(3)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Move back again in okuri-ashi as the men strike is blocked with the ha-bu.

Shikake

(4)' When Shikake's *naginata* is rendered ineffective with *harai*, the back hand (right) should maintain contact with the body, and the front hand should grip the *naginata* lightly, allowing it to slide.

(5) Pull the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*) to wind up for the *tsuki* attack.

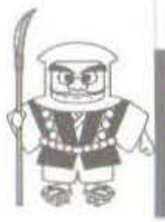
(6) Thrust the *ishizuki* into Shikake's side. (Shout *tsuki- Zanshin*).

Oji

(4) Knock Shikake's *naginata* to the left with the *e-bu* (*harai*).

Rotate the body to the left using fumikae-ashi, and execute the harai with the monouchi of the e-bu.

Shikake	Oji
(7) Return to *chudan*.	
	Maintaining alertness, Oji steps back from the front foot (right) then the left and assumes wakigamae.
Assume chudan.	
	Pivoting on the left foot, pull the front foot (right) back and assume chudan by bringing the kissaki overhead and down the centre-line.
(8) Return to original positions.	
Move back with ayumi-ashi (left, right, left, right.)	*Move forward with ayumi-ashi (right, left, right, left.)*



Important Points:
The *harai* executed by Oji should be executed with the whole body and not just the arms.

Shikake-Oji

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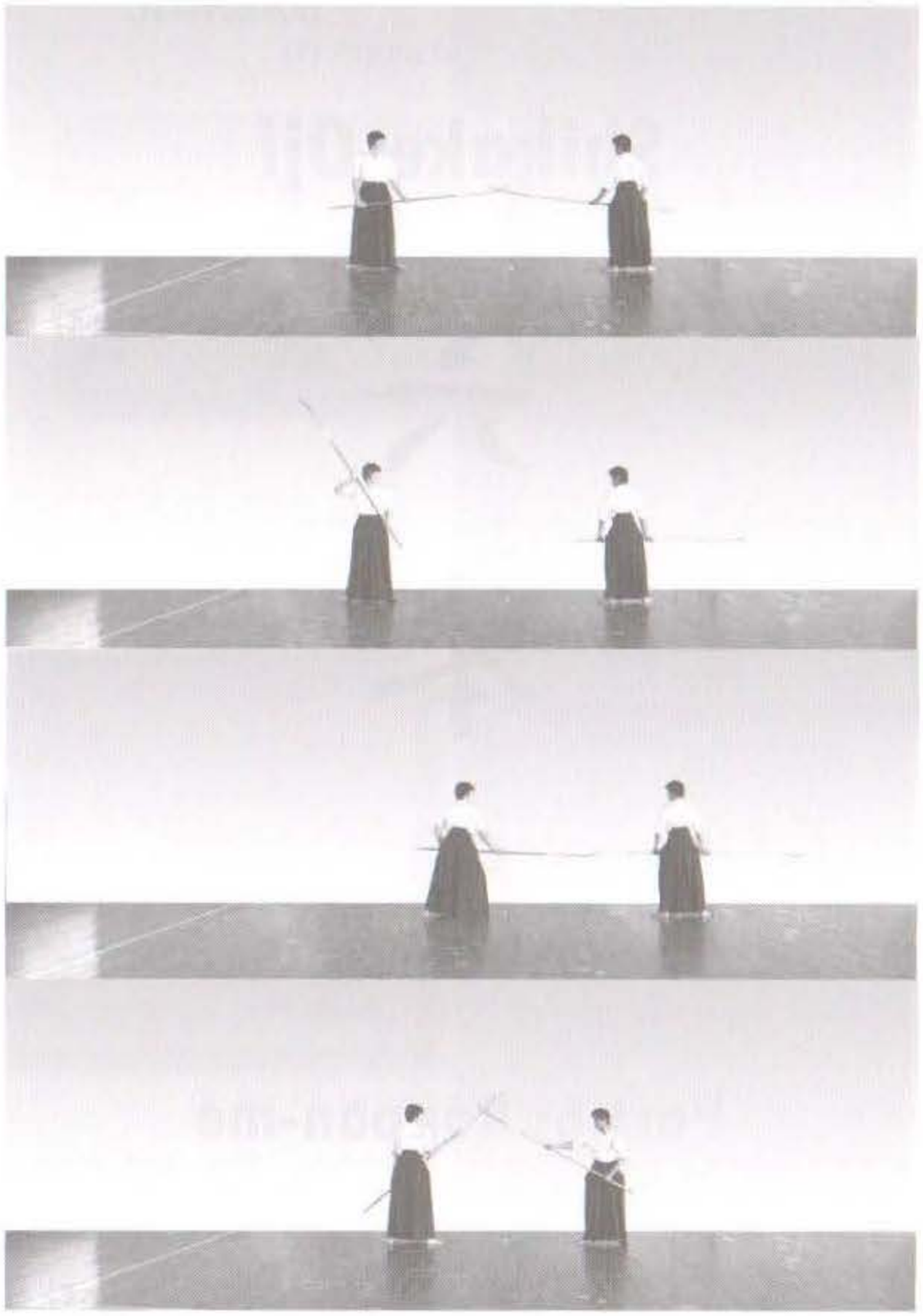
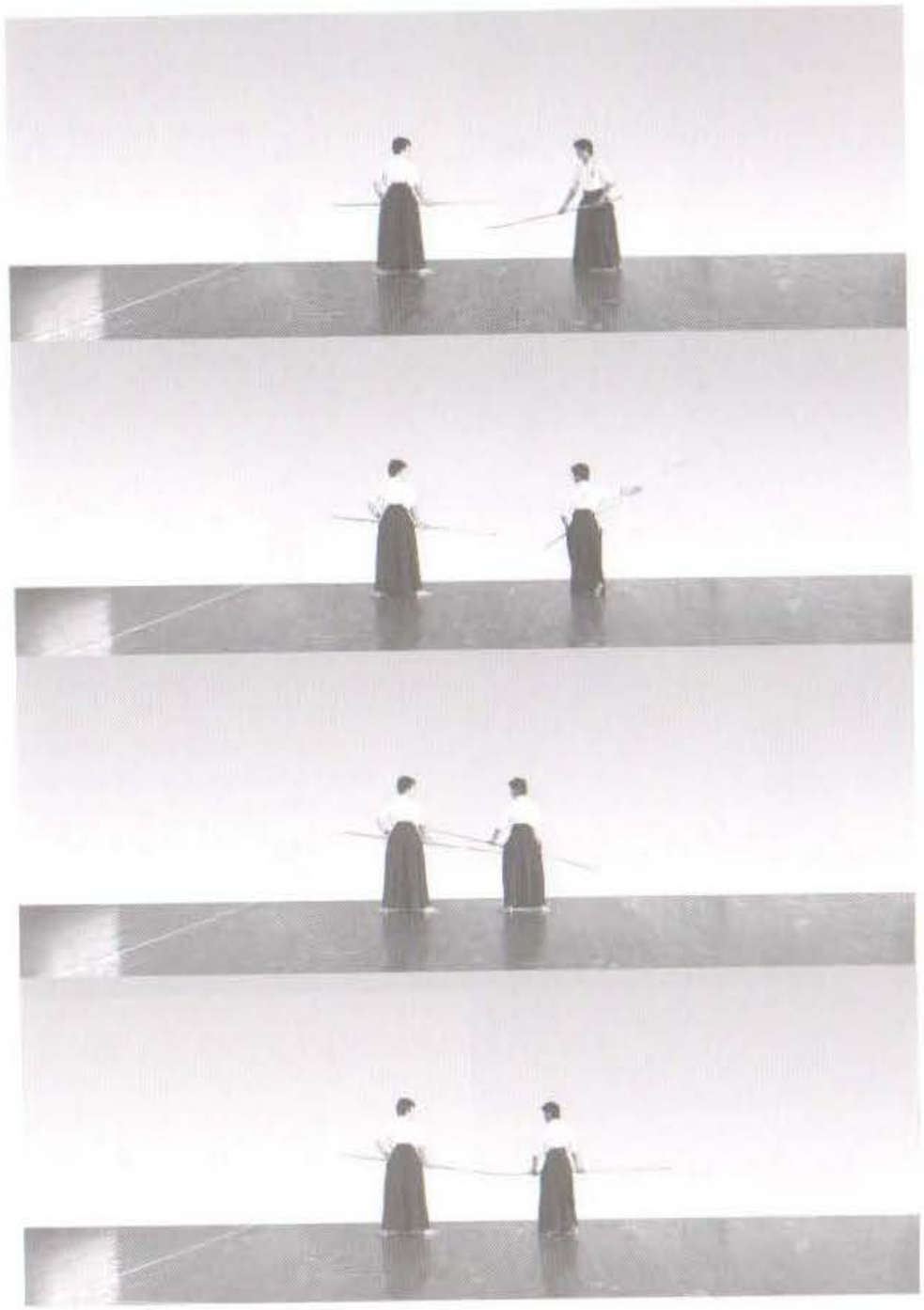
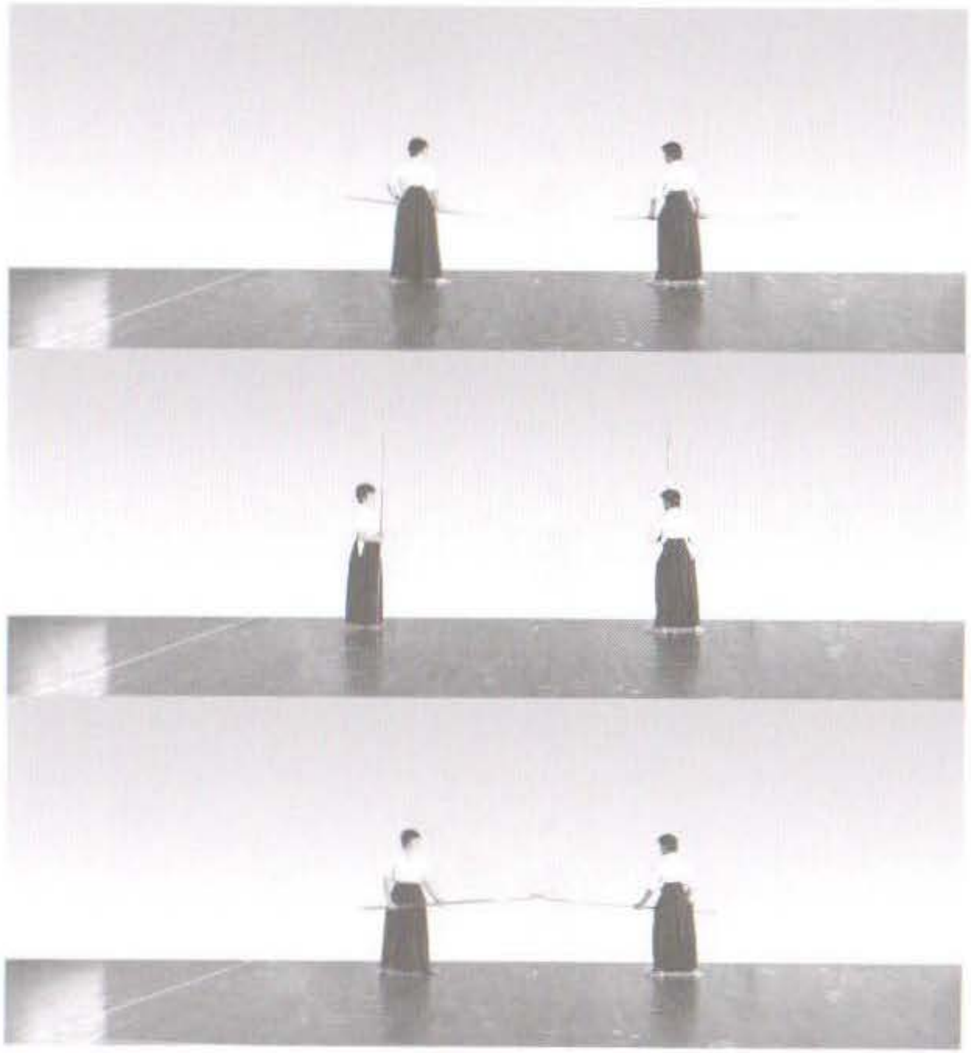
Part 6: Roppon-me







Shikake

From *ai-chudan*

Assume *hasso*.

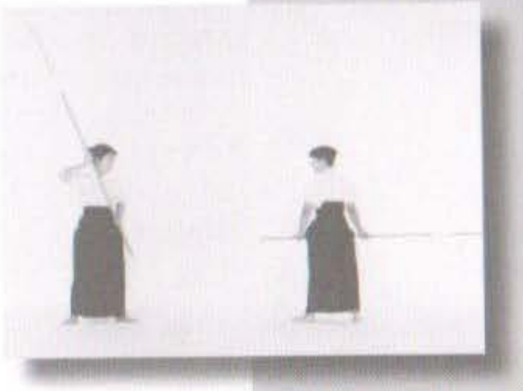
(1) Strike *kote*. (Shout *kote*.)

Pivoting on the front foot, step forward with the back foot (right) and strike kote. As the attack is dodged, the kissaki should continue to slightly below the height of kote.

(2)' Block the *men* strike with the *ha-bu* while moving back with *okuri-ashi*.

Oji

Assume *wakigamae*.



(1)' Dodge the *kote* attack (*nuki*).

From wakigamae, step back with okuri-ashi and dodge the kote strike (nuki).

(2) Pivoting on the front foot, immediately step forward with the back foot (right) and strike *men*. (Shout *men*).

Shikake

(3) Move back with *okuri-ashi* while flicking Oji's *naginata* down to the left (*harai*).

Oji

(3)' Using the momentum from the *harai*, pivot on the front foot (right) and spin the body around to the opposite side while pulling the naginata back and in (*kurikomi*), and prepare to execute a *tsuki* attack with body weight resting on the pivotal foot.

(4) Stepping forward with the left foot, thrust the *ishizuki* into Shikake's side. (Shout *tsuki- Zanshin*).

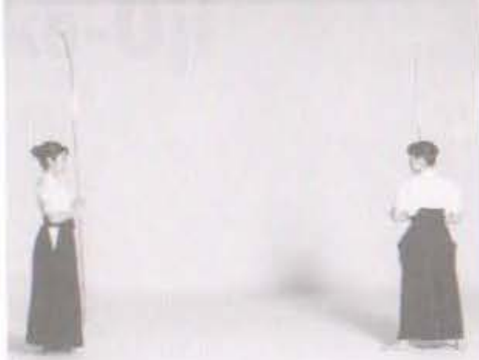
(5) Return to *chudan*.

Draw the front foot (right) back even with the back foot so that the hips are facing the front. Bring the hands together in the middle of the e-bu and then step out with the left foot to assume chudan.

Assume wakigamae while stepping back with the left foot then the right. Then bring the hands together in the middle of the e-bu and assume chudan.

Shikake

Oji



Shikake and Oji should be already in the original starting positions when assuming ai-chudan, so there should be no necessity to move.

Important Points:

From Roppon-me onwards, both Shikake and Oji assume the appropriate *kamae* in synchronisation from *chudan* first, and then begin the sequence. All cutting attacks by Shikake and Oji must be straight with the *naginata* coming through the centre. As with all *harai* movements done in the Shikake-Oji sequences, the *harai* by Shikake must not be executed with too much physical strength. In executing the final *tsuki* attack, Oji places their body weight on the pivotal foot and spins around to the right, and after a slight pause finishes the attack. Again, as with all Shikake-Oji sequences, eye-contact must be maintained at all times.

Shikake-Oji

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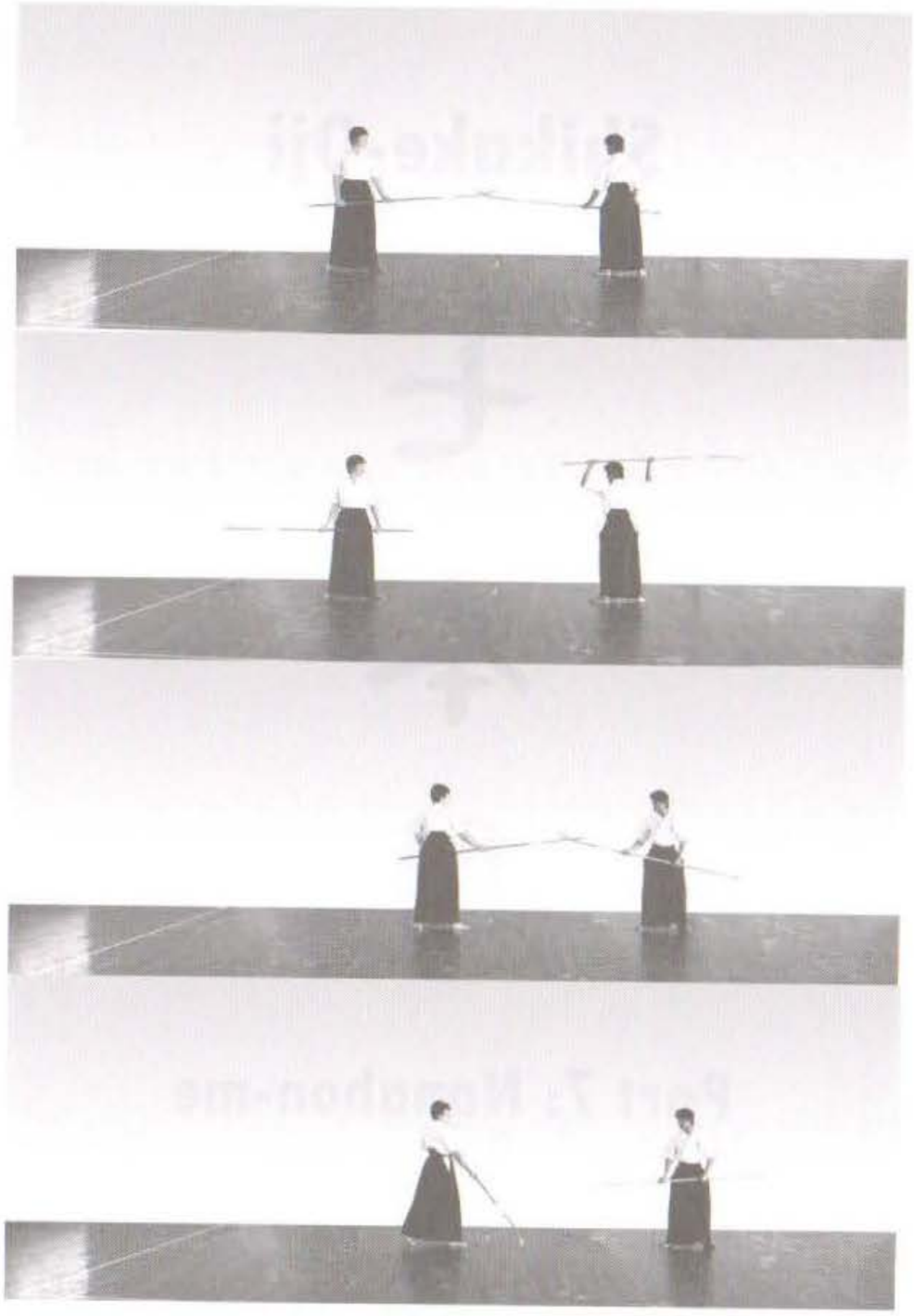
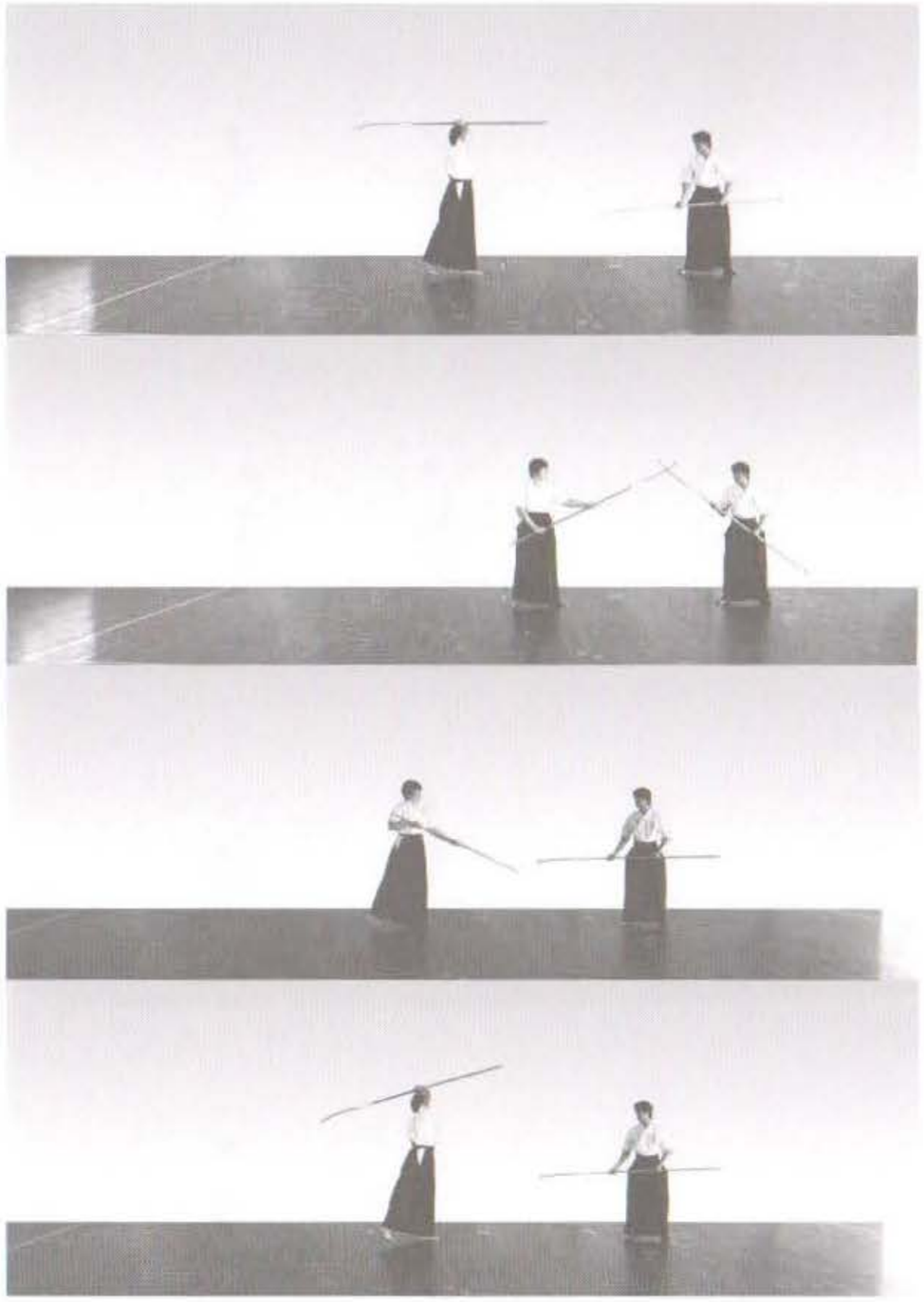
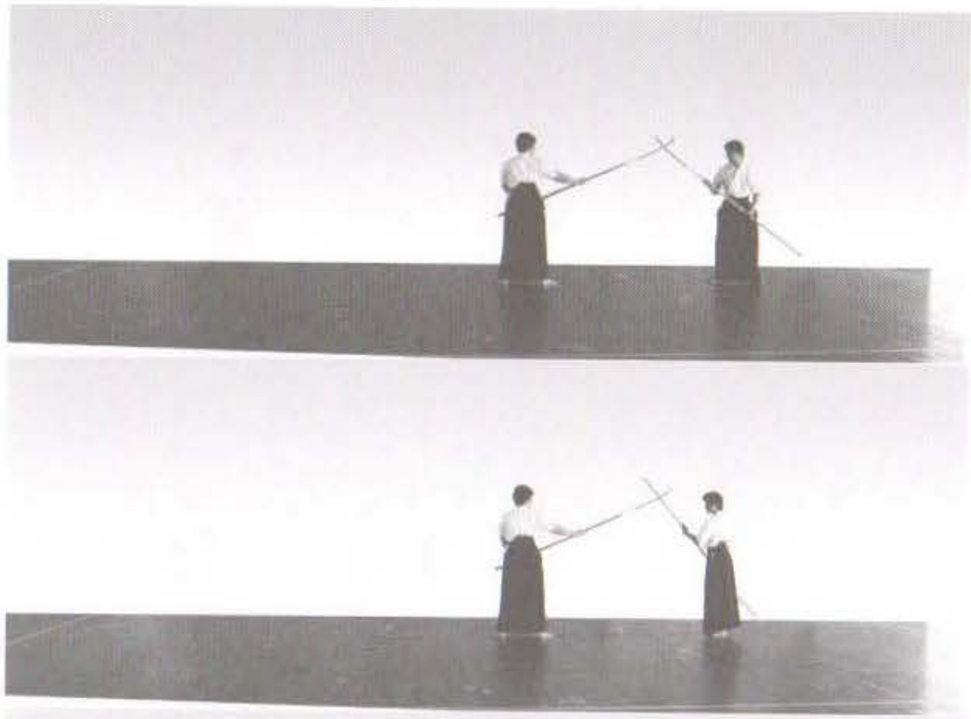
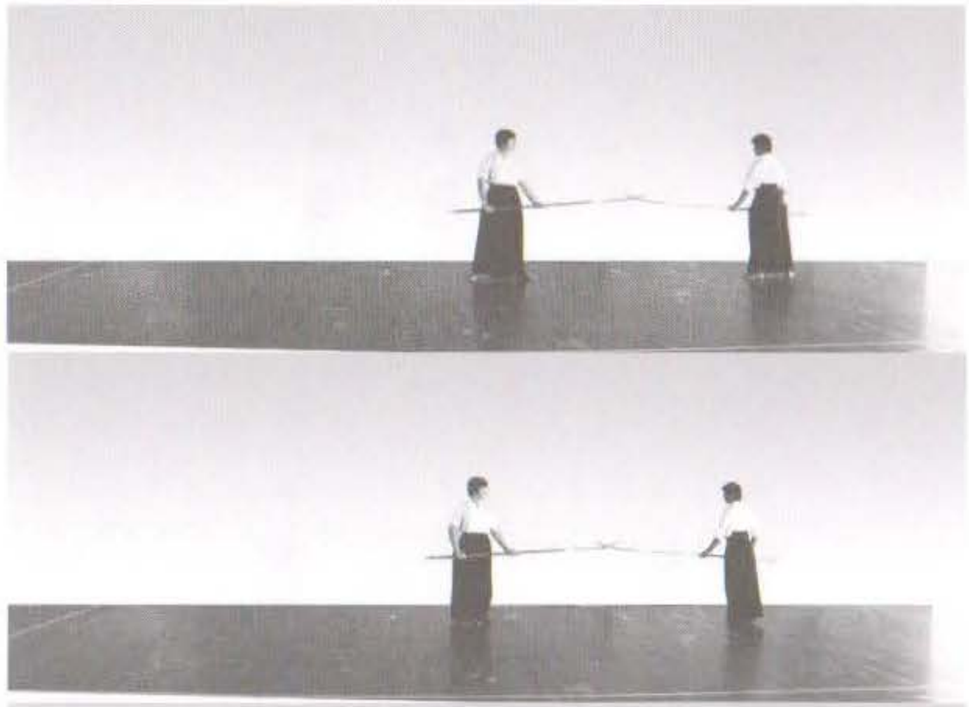
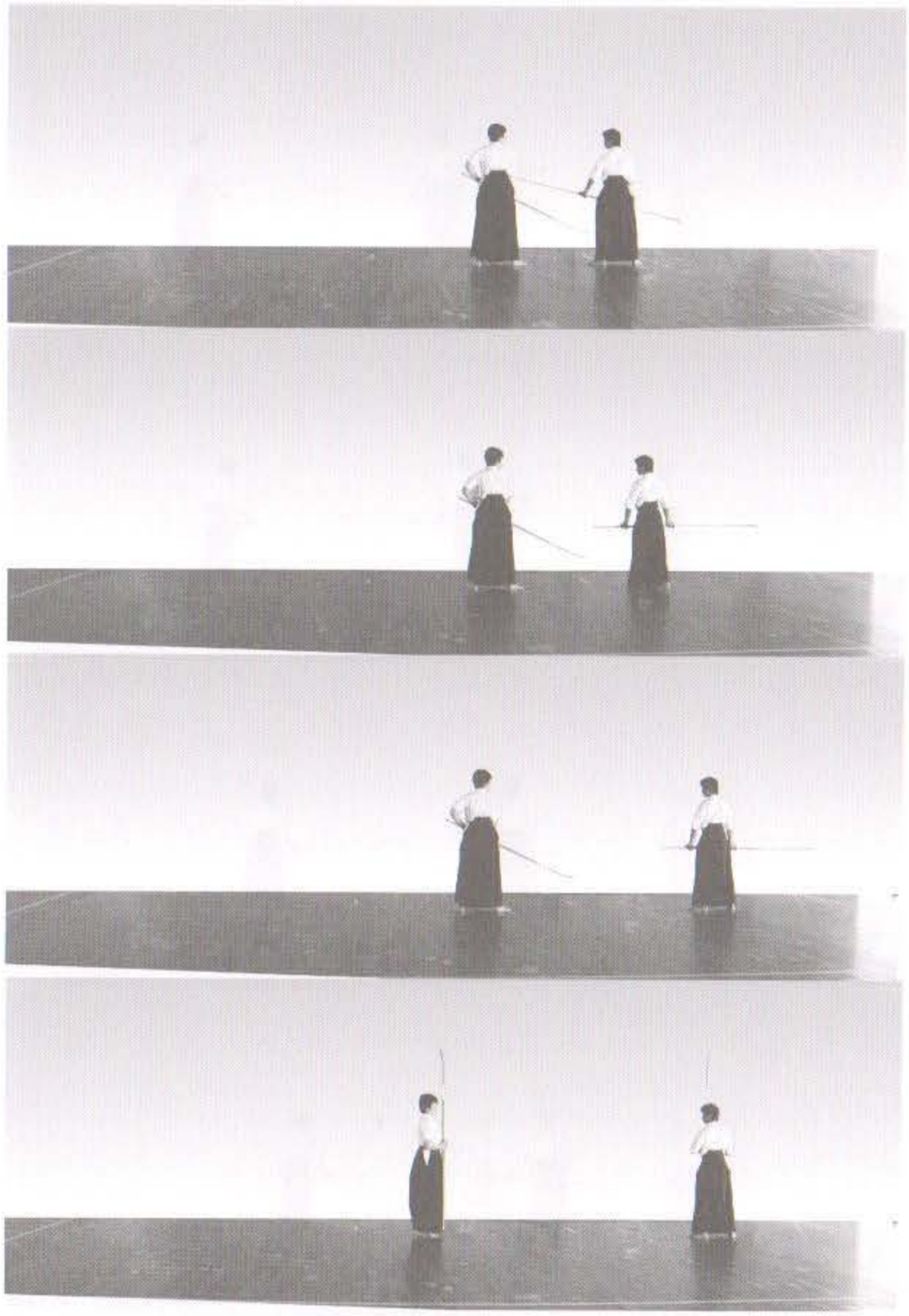
Part 7: Nanahon-me

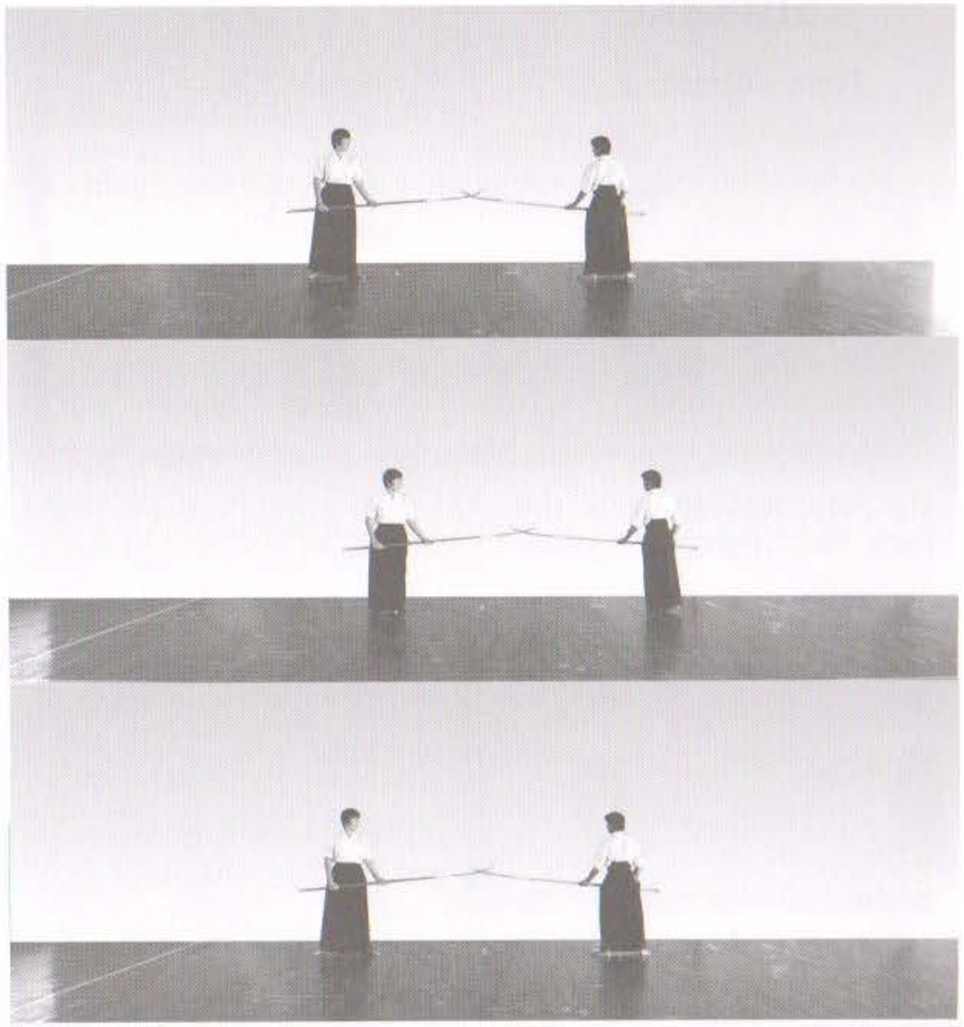






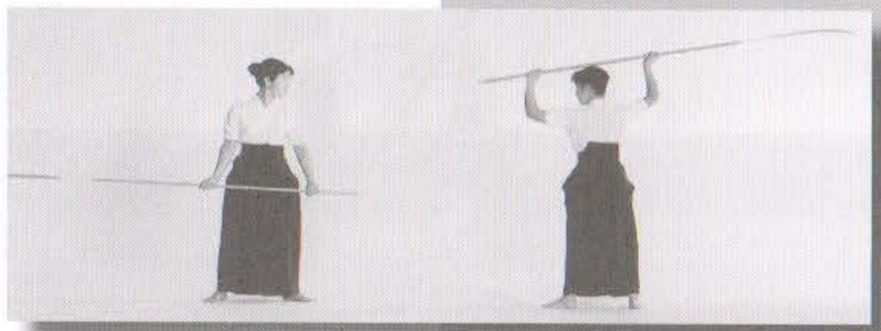




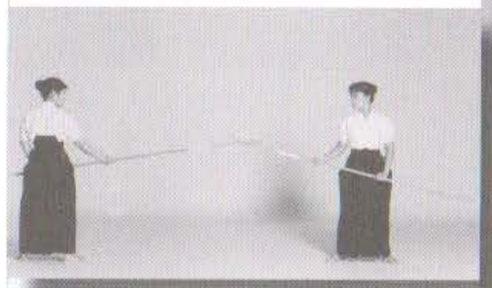


Shikake

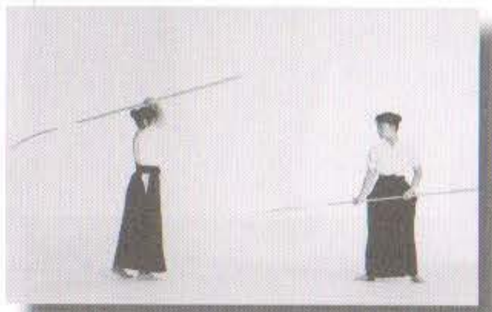
From *wakigamae*.



(1) Step through with the back foot (right) and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).



(3) Using the momentum from the *harai*, strike *furi-kaeshi-men*. (Shout *men*).



Oji

From *jodan*.

(1)' Block the *do* strike with the *monouchi* of the *ha-bu*.

From jodan, pull the front foot (left) back and block the do strike with the ha-bu.

(2) Move back with *okuri-ashi* and flick Shikake's *naginata* to the left (*harai*).

(3)' Block with the *ha-bu*.

Move back with okuri-ashi as the men strike is blocked with the ha-bu.

Shikake

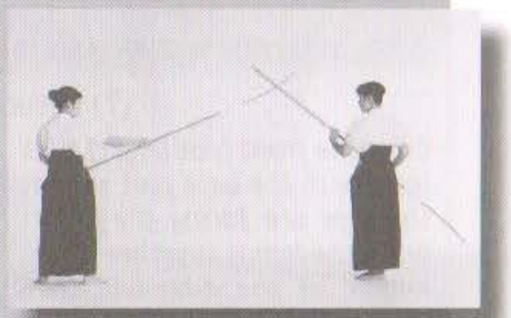
(5) Using the momentum from the *harai*, strike *furikaeshi-men*. (Shout *men*).

(6)' When the *naginata* is rendered ineffective with *makiotoshi*, the back hand (right) should maintain contact with the body, and the front hand should grip the *naginata* lightly, allowing it to slide.

Oji

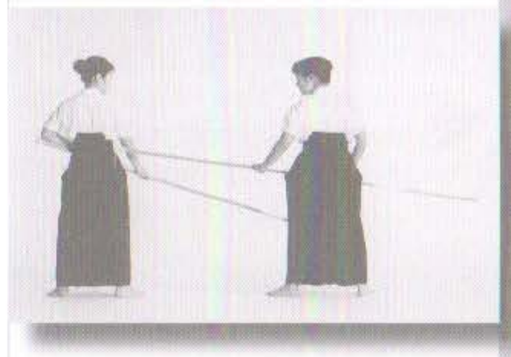
(4) Move back with *okuri-ashi* while flicking Shikake's *naginata* down to the right (*harai*).

(6) Rotate around to the left with *fumikae-ashi* and knock (harai) Shikake's *naginata* down with the *e-bu*. Immediately pull the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*), then lunge forward from the left foot for *tsuki*. (Shout *tsuki-Zanshin*).



Turn on the spot with fumikae-ashi.

Knock Shikake's naginata down with the e-bu (harai-otoshi).

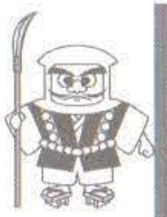
Shikake	Oji
	After executing the harai-otoshi, pull the naginata back (kurikomi) ready to make the final tsuki attack.
	*Lunging forward from the left foot, thrust at Shikake's side with the ishizuki. The blade should be facing outward*

(7) Return to *chudan*.

Draw the front foot (right) back level with the back foot so that the hips are facing the front. Bring the hands together in the middle of the e-bu and then step out with the left foot to assume chudan.	*Assume wakigamae while stepping back from the left the right foot. Then bring the hands together in the middle of the e-bu and step out with the left foot to assume chudan.*

(8) Return to original positions.

Move back with ayumi-ashi (left, right, left, right, left, right).	*Move forward with ayumi-ashi (right, left, right, left, right, left).*



Important Points:
In executing the *harai-otoshi*, Shikake's *naginata* should be knocked down by striking the *monouchi* and then pulling the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*) to get ready for the thrust. The rear hand (right) should be touching the hip at point of impact, and should not move until the *naginata* is pulled back.

Shikake-Oji

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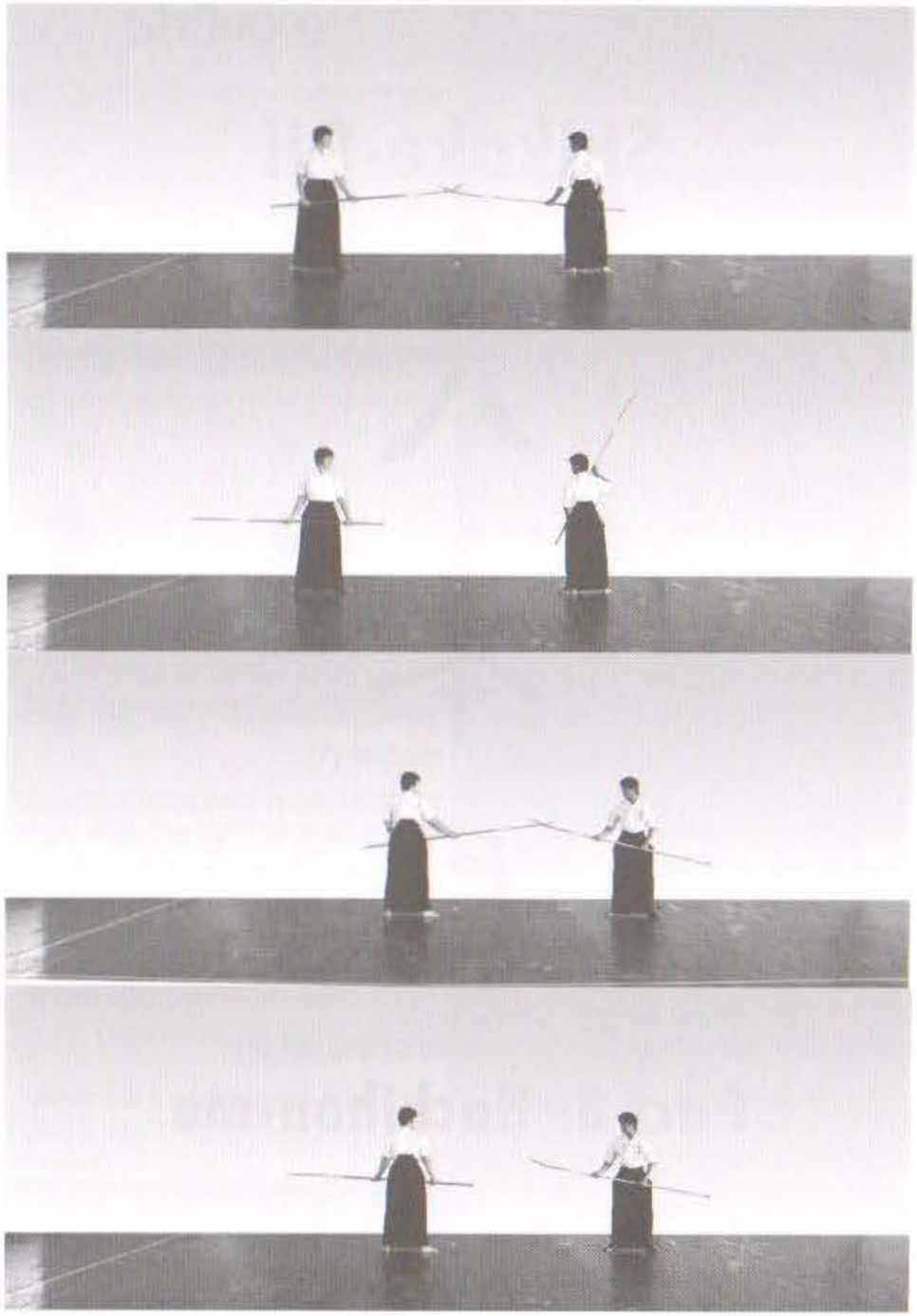
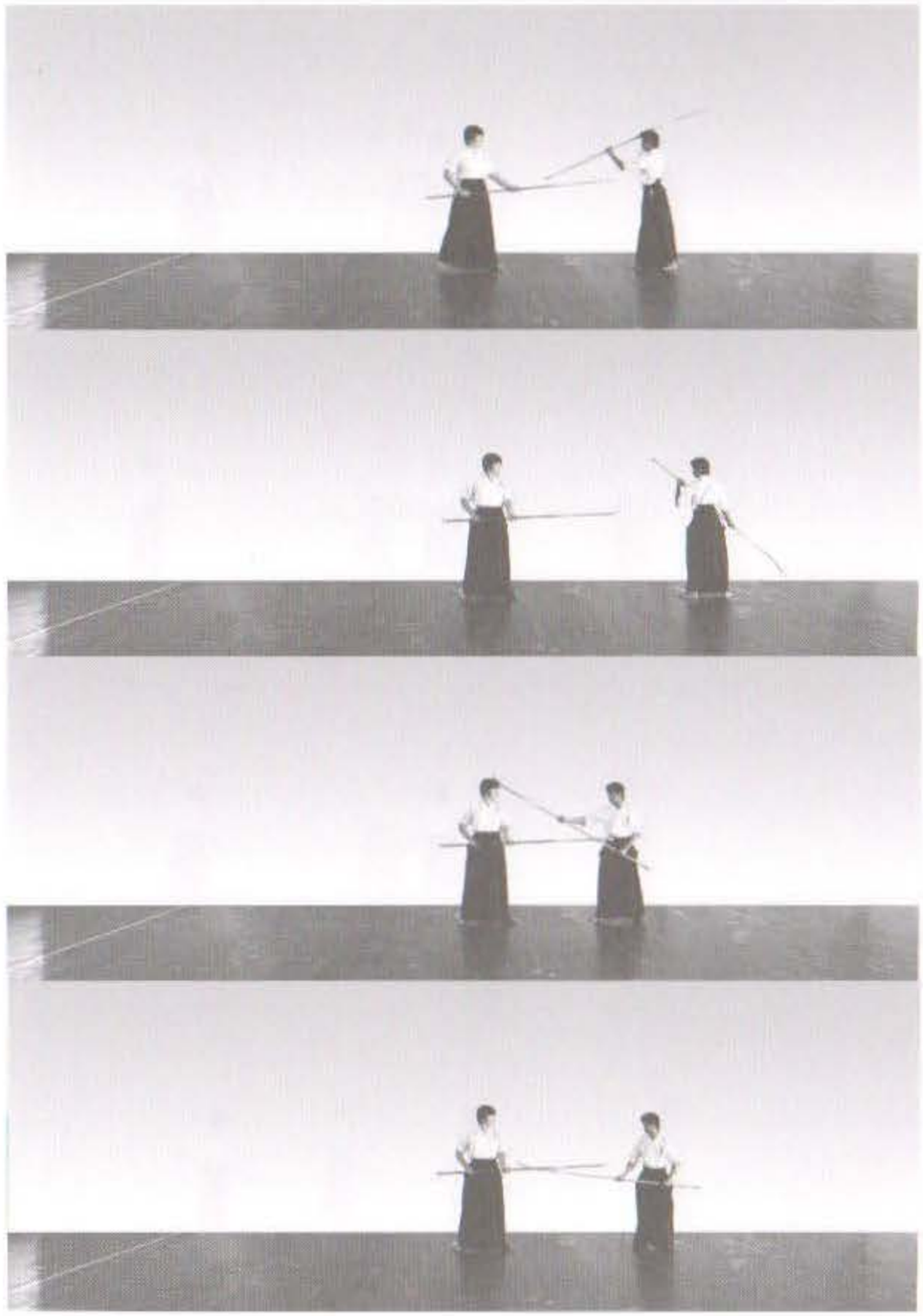
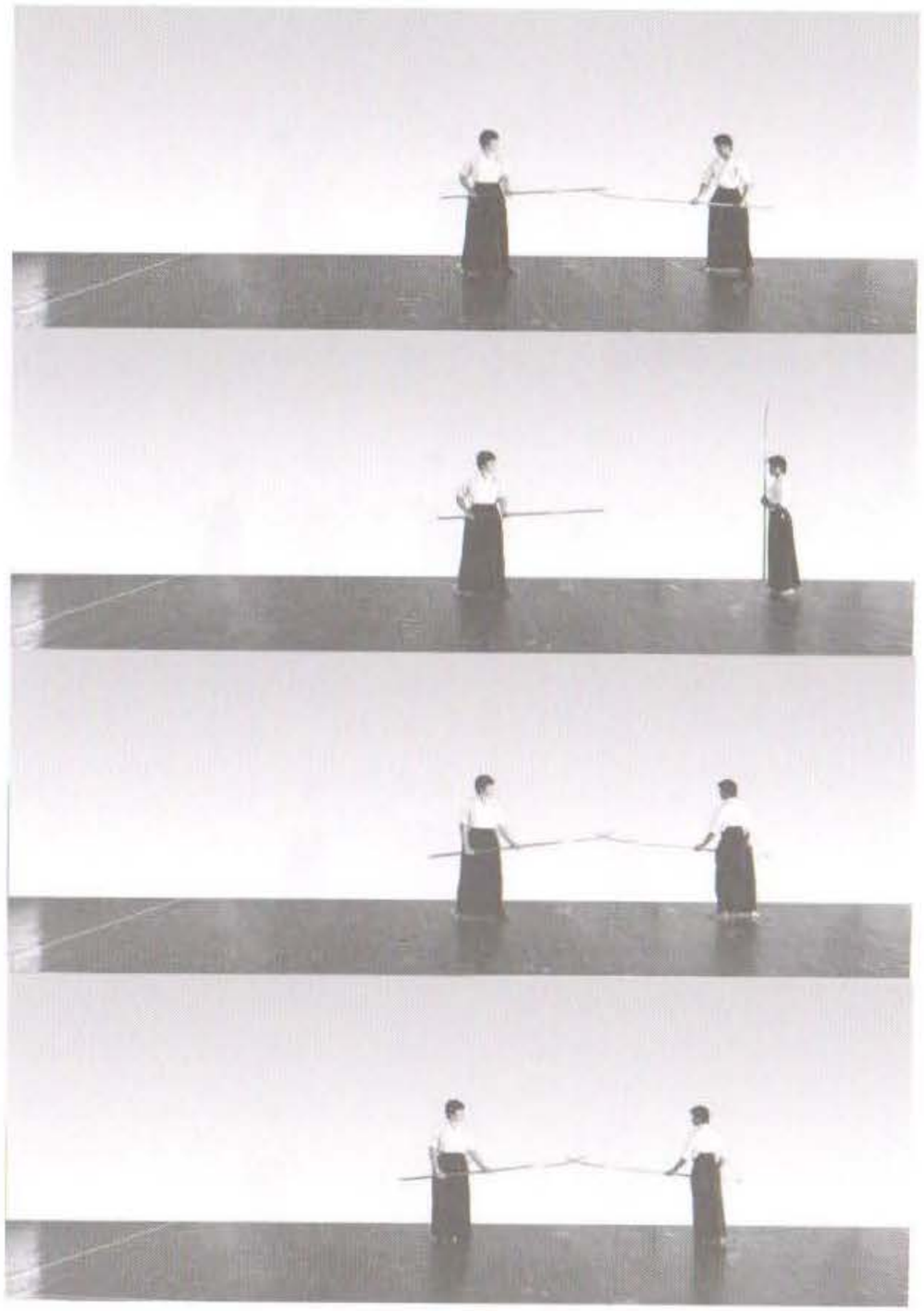
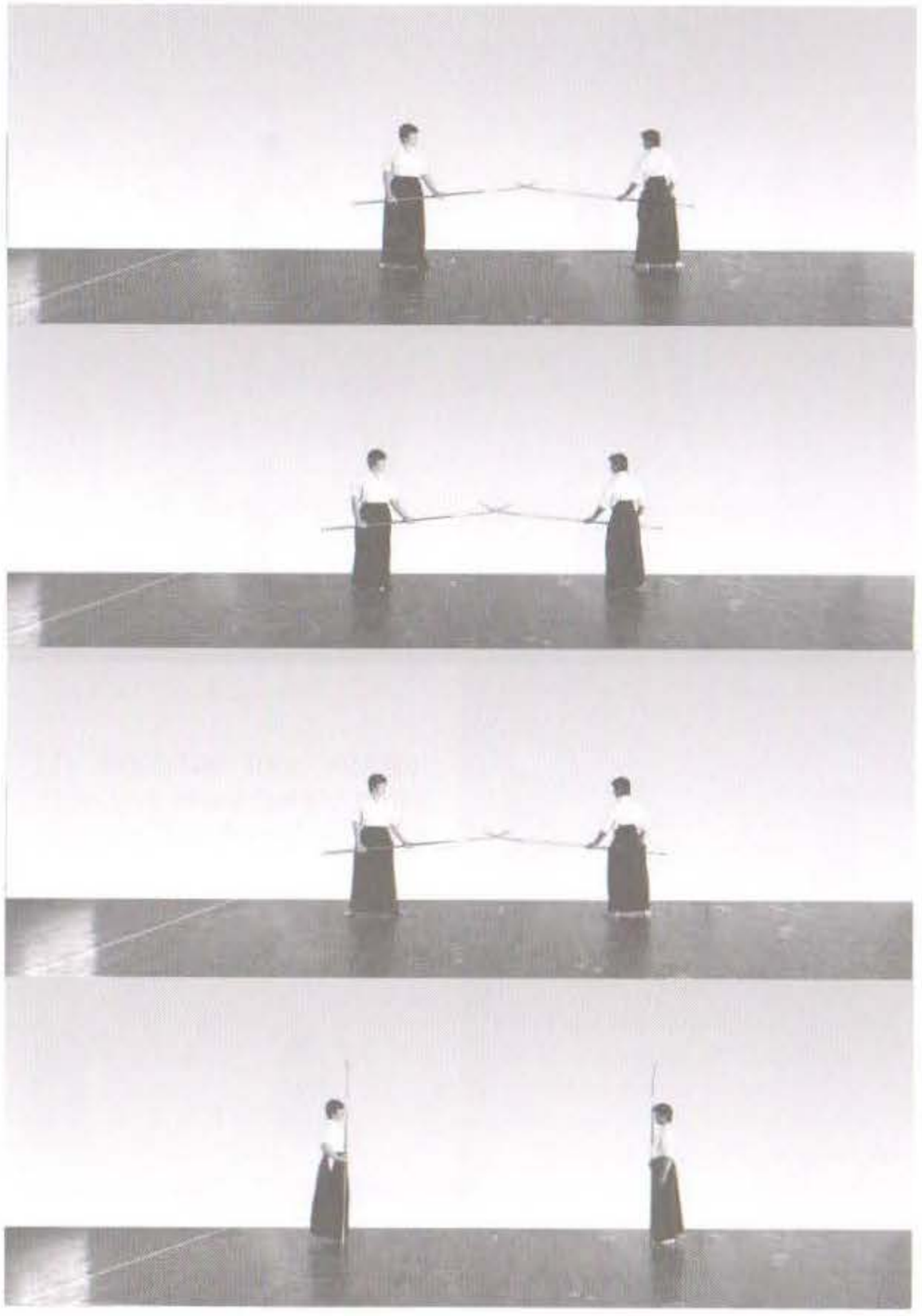
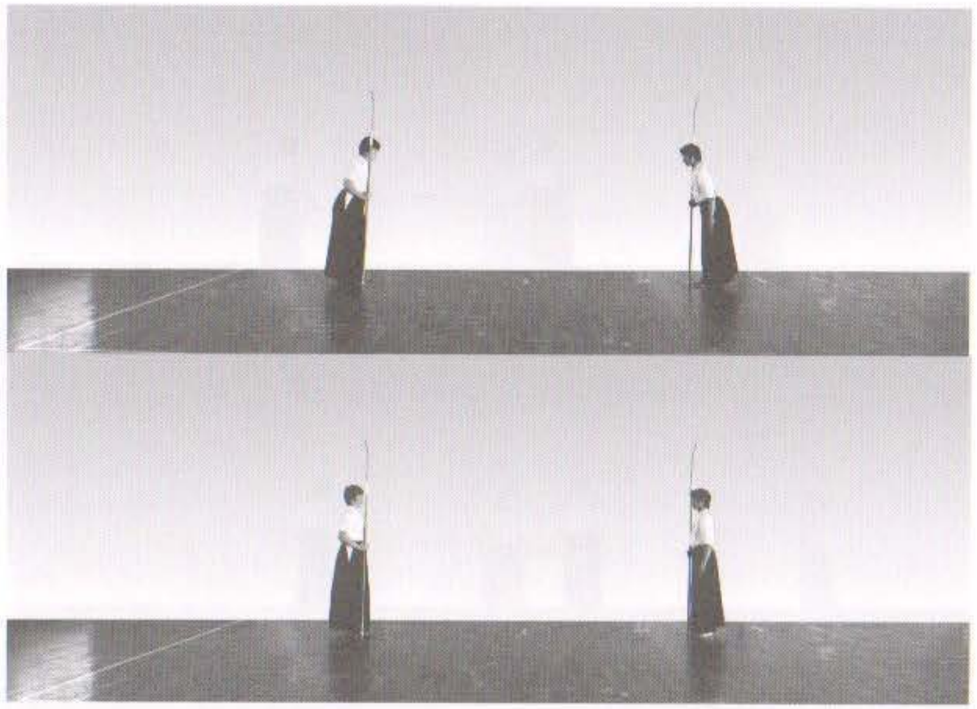
Part 8: Hachihon-me









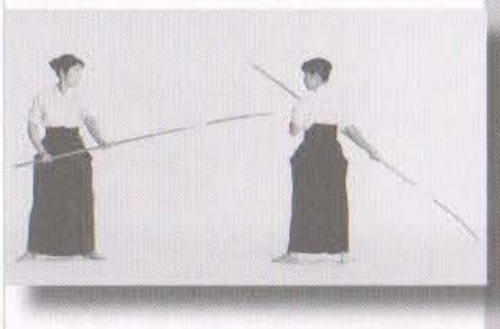


Shikake

From *wakigamae*.

(1) Step forward with the back foot (right) and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).

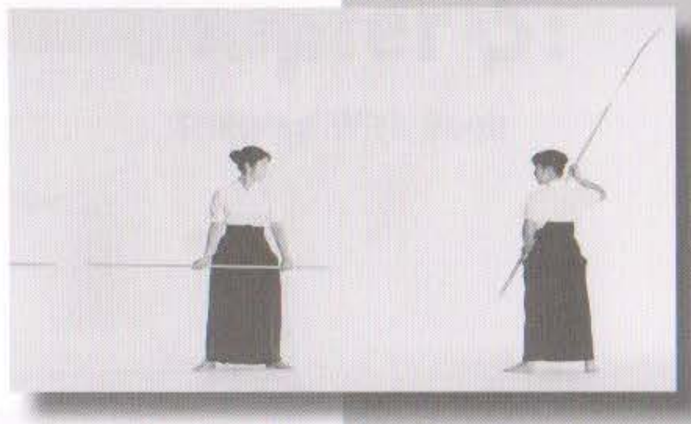
(2) *Mochikae* into *wakiga-mae* and immediately make another attack to *do*. (Shout *do- Zanshin*).



As the attack will be dodged, the strike should carry on slightly past the target. Maintain eye-contact and remain in that position.

Oji

From *hasso*.

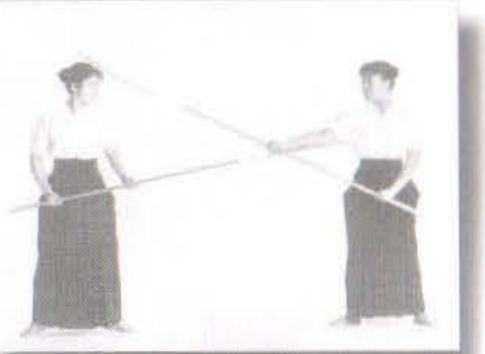


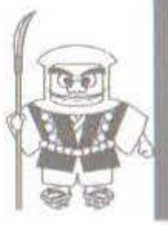
(1)' Stepping back from the front foot (left) block the *do* attack with the *ha-bu*.

Draw the front foot (right) back and rotate the body to face the other way as the kissaki is pulled behind to avoid the do attack.

(2)' Step back and dodge the *do* strike.

Pulling the front foot back, the body turns and faces the opposite direction as the do strike is blocked with the monouchi of the ha-bu.

Shikake	Oji
	(3) Strike men. (Shout *men-Zanshin*).
	
	Step forward from the back (left) foot, pull the ishizuki down through the centre as the final men strike is made.
(4) Return to *chudan*.	
Assume chudan in time with Oji.	*Retreat from the left the right foot as the naginata is brought down into chudan.*
(5) Return to original positions.	
Move back with ayumi-ashi in time with Oji (left, right, left, right).	*Move forward with ayumi-ashi (right, left, right, left).*



Important Points:

Make sure that the attacks to *do* are strong, and not too high. As is the case with all of the Shikake-Oji sequences, Oji should wait until the last possible moment before blocking or dodging Shikake's attacks.

Chapter 5:

Training With Bogu

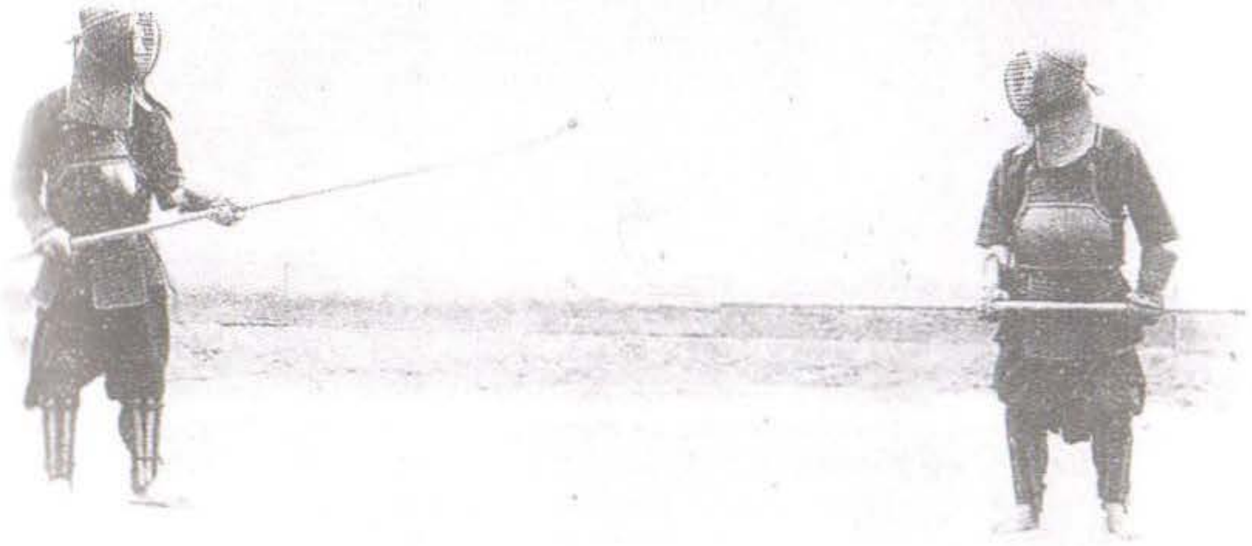


Photo from Kokumin Naginata-do Kyohon, 1941.

Part 1- First Things First

In competition or sparring with *bogu* on, you are essentially putting into practise everything that you have been working on during *kihon* training. To be good at Naginata, your movement and execution of techniques has to be second nature. Thus, the repeated practise of *kihon* techniques is very important. It is important to practise with as many different people as possible to get used to different timing and distance. Also, the practitioner must strive to strike the correct targets with upright posture, good *kamae*, confidence in perception, strong *kiai*, appropriate *ma-ai*, and with *zanshin* etc. All these factors are important in the practise of Naginata.

When you practise in *bogu* for the first time it will feel extremely awkward when you try to move. Until you are able to move freely without distraction, it is advisable to practise striking against hit dummies or other such equipment. It is also a good idea not to put all the *bogu* on straightaway. Get used to striking and moving with each piece of *bogu* piece by piece.

Also, as you will now actually be making full-contact strikes, you must be considerate to your training partner, and be careful not to hurt them with careless and violent strikes. In the course of any training session, you will accidentally strike and be struck on uncovered parts of the body. This is inevitable, and is an important part of your training. Obviously, the less it happens the better. However, as long as you execute your attacks correctly without using too much superfluous strength, you will not injure your partner in an accidental miss. The golden rule is to strike slowly and accurately at first and gradually build up speed and strength as you become more proficient. By this stage, you will be able to make full spirited and vigorous attacks with confidence.

Injury prevention

Compared to the basic training methods we have covered so far, training in *bogu* is considerably more rigorous. Now that the techniques are executed with full force, and the fact that each training partner will have different characteristics and be unpredictable in their movements, the risk for injury is increased significantly. Naturally, warm-up exercises should be conducted at the beginning of each session, followed by cool-down exercises at the end.

Students warming up and stretching in the background before putting bogu on

In many Naginata *dojo*, the standard procedure is to warm-up with stretches and then commence *happo-buri*, and striking practice. This will often be followed by some sets of Shikake-Oji before *bogu* training begins. In other *dojo*, *bogu* training may be started straight away. In either case, make sure that you are completely warm and stretched before putting *bogu* on. Once you have put your *bogu* on, it is difficult to stretch properly, so it is advisable to stretch properly before doing so.

Some practitioners mistakenly think that Shikake-Oji and the other *kihon* exercises constitute a warm-up. Although better than

nothing, this is entirely inadequate as preparation for the rigours of *bogu* training. Careful stretches of muscles and limbering of joints will enhance the quality of your training, and will also help prevent injury.

Also, in regards to injury prevention, an often overlooked aspect is taking proper care of your equipment. *Bogu* is designed to protect the wearer from blows to the body. If any part of your armour is loose, or becomes untied during the course of training, you will be left vulnerable to injury. Therefore, be sure to tie all pieces on securely. This applies to the *sune*, *do*, and *men* cords. Concentrate on learning how to attach *bogu* quickly and securely but also in a way such that it is able to be removed quickly if required. Make sure that your *bogu* and *naginata* are always kept in perfect order, not only for your own safety, but for the people you will be training with. This is a basic courtesy in Naginata, and should be strictly observed.

Part 2- Putting Bogu On

Before a competition or training, *bogu* should be placed to the side of the *dojo*, ready to put on when necessary. Place the *sune-ate* down first, then the *kote* on top of the *sune-ate*, followed by the *men* face down on top of the *kote*. Fold the *men* cords and place them inside the *men*. The *tenugui* (*men* towel) is placed over the back of the *men*. The *tare* is wrapped around the *do*, and they are placed in front of the other equipment.

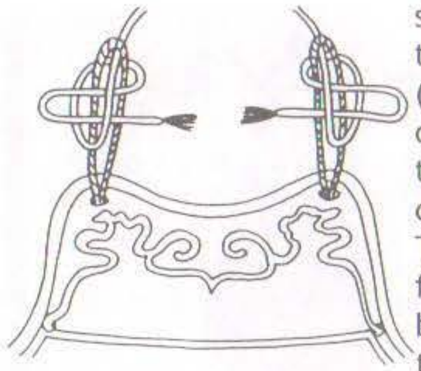
Bogu is attached in the following order:

1. Tare

Place the large centre *tare* flap in the centre of the body at waist level. Pass the *tare* cords around the back, cross the two sides below the *hakama's koshi-ita*, then pulling firmly, bring the chords back to the front. Tie in a bow under the centre flap.

2. Do

Place the *do* against the chest. Any necessary height adjustments can be made by moving the left *himo* (cord) toward the right



shoulder or vice-versa. Pass the *himo* through the loop from back to front. (See diagram). Pull the loop of the *do* cord and adjust the remaining cord to the same length. Then, tie the shorter cords in a horizontal bow at the back. Tighten the knot by pulling the cords firmly on each side. There should not be a large gap existing between the top of the *do* and the *men* flaps.

3. Sune-ate

Place the *sune-ate* over the *hakama* with the bamboo slats facing the outside. (Try to keep the pleats of the *hakama* as straight as possible). Wrap the top and bottom cords around the leg twice and tie in secure bows. Tuck the remainder of the cords out of the way. When you put the *sune-ate* on, it is considered good manners to face away from the *dojo's shomen*.

4. Tenugui

The *tenugui* is put on under the *men* in order to prevent chafing and to absorb sweat, stopping it from getting in your eyes. There are various ways of putting the *tenugui* on, but the following way is the most common.

Take hold of the *tenugui* from the top corners and hold it open. Place the *tenugui* on your face and slide it back over your forehead, so that the edge held by your fingers comes down to cover the back of your head.

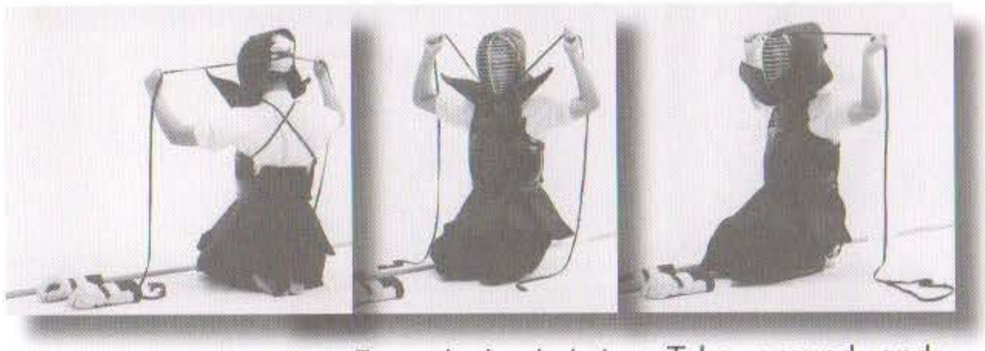
Fold each corner of the *tenugui* in turn across your forehead, so that they reach the opposite side behind your ears.

Take hold of the lower edge hanging in front of your face, and lift it over the top of your head, and flatten it down.

The *tenugui* should not be too tight as it will cause discomfort during training. Care must also be taken so that it is not loose. If it slips down covering your eyes during sparring or a match, you will make an easy target, or even be in danger of injury. It is also inconvenient to have to cease activity temporarily in order to take off the *men* to re-fasten the *tenugui*. For the sake of hygiene, be sure to wash it after each training session.

5. Men

There are two ways to secure the men, tying from the top or from the bottom. The *men* should fit snugly on your chin and forehead. You should be able to see clearly from the space between the sixth and seventh bars from the top. Wrap the *men* cords around to the back, front, then back again, as shown in the photos. Before tying at the back, the cords should be threaded through the very top bars, and then around to the back where they are tied in a bow. The cords dangling at the back should all be of equal length.



From the front, take around and cross at the back.

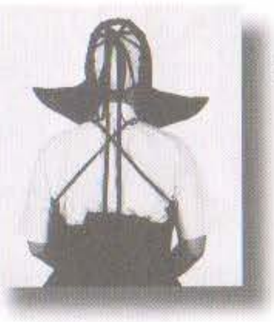
From the back, bring around and cross under the chin.

Take around and cross at the back again.

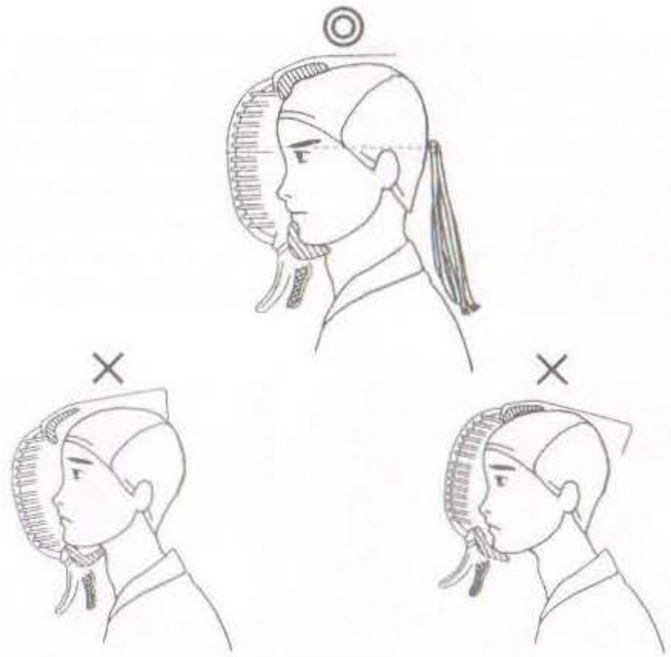
Thread through the top bars.

Take around to the back and tie in a bow.

Good example

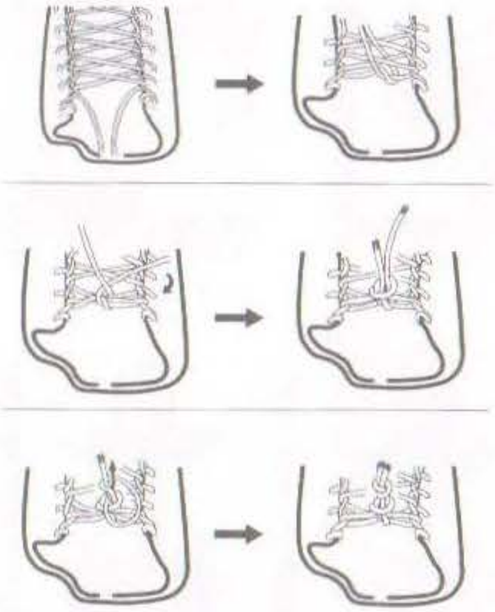


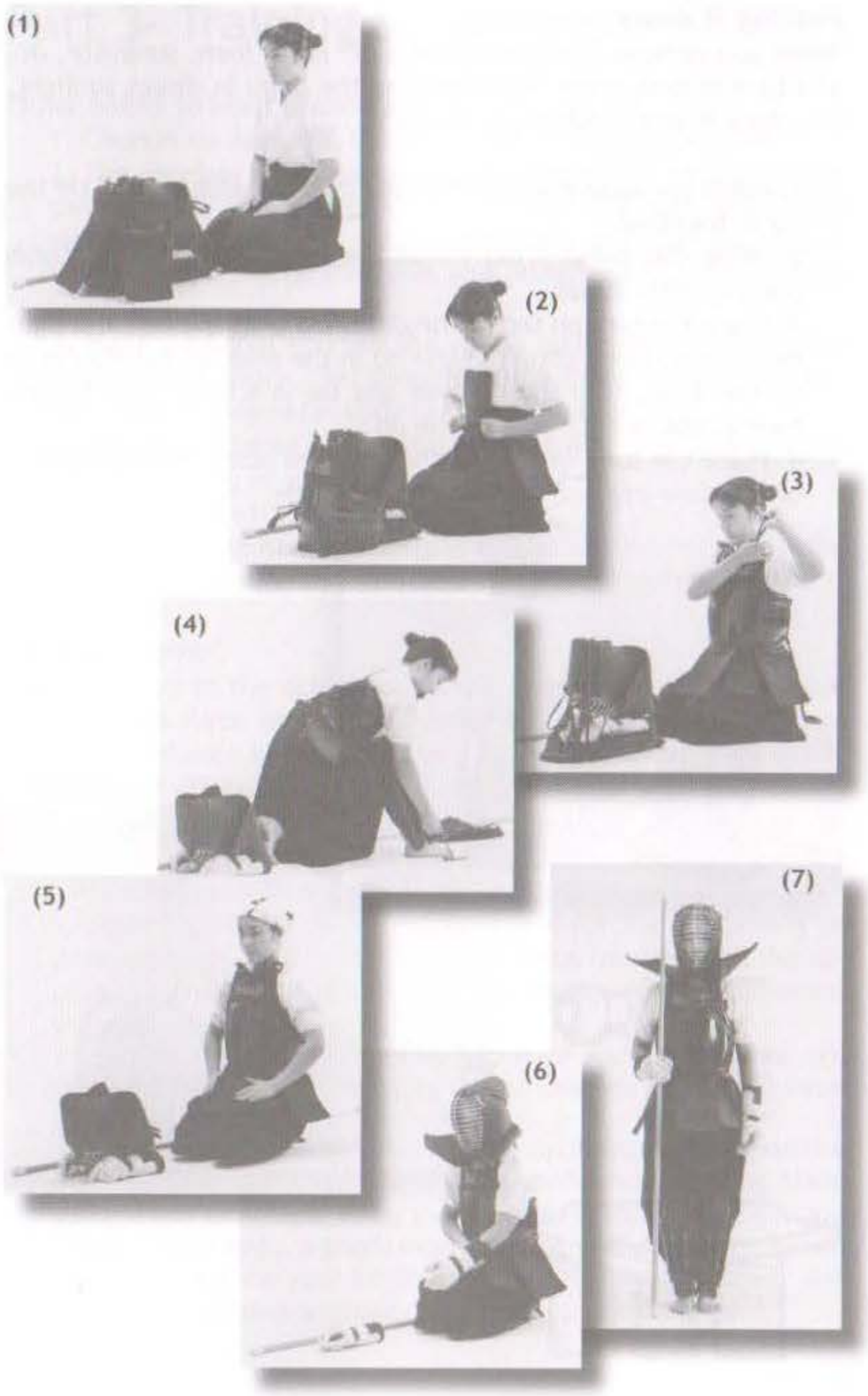
Bad example



6. Kote

Always put the left *kote* on first, followed by the right. When removing *kote* take off from the right. Do not pull at the fist section as this will weaken the *kote* at the wrist. Make sure that the laces are tied neatly and securely.

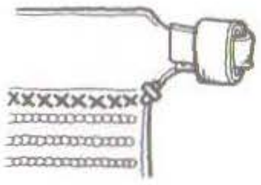


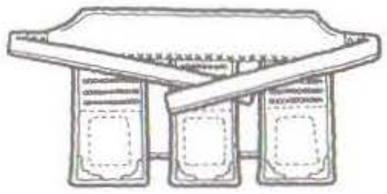


Putting it Away

When you remove the armour, take off *kote*, *men*, *sune-ate*, *do*, and *tare* in that order. Avoid placing the *bogu* in direct sunlight, but place it in a windy place to dry it.

1. Place the *sune-ate* together, bamboo to bamboo, and tie the cords together.
2. Wipe the sweat from inside the *men*, and fold the cords placing them inside.
3. Place the *tare* on top of the *do*. Cross over the left and right *mune-himo* (long cords) of the *do* in the middle. Pulling firmly on the *himo*, turn the *do* over and tie in a bow. Also, tie the *tare* straps to each side of the *do*.
4. Place the *sune-ate* inside the *do*, then place the *men* on top of the *sune-ate* and one *kote* in each side.





Part 3- Training Sequences

Other points to keep in mind are:

1. *Chudan-no-kamae* is the basic stance to practise from.
2. The receiver (*motodachi*) should always take care to adjust the distance and clearly indicate where the attacker should strike. Learning how to receive attacks is an important step in improving your attacking skill and understanding of Naginata principles.
3. Make sure that you use the whole body when striking, and not just the hands. You should aim to strike with *ki-ken-tai-itchi* (Spirit- *naginata*- body- as one united entity).
4. Maintain intense concentration, and attack as soon as you see an opening in your partner's defence.
5. Do not just attack aimlessly, but calculate your options.
6. *Shikake* (offensive) techniques are usually the focus of training, but make sure that you also practise *oji* techniques.

How to 'seme'

'*Seme*' refers to the act of assailing or applying pressure on your opponent to force an opening. *Seme* is to take the initiative to close the distance between you and the opponent with full spirit. This has the effect of putting the opponent off balance physically and mentally, and prevents them from moving freely, giving you the advantage. In this sense, it is important to intentionally attack and strike, not just to attack relying on chance.

1. *Seme* the *kissaki*- An effective way of forcing an opening on your opponent is to knock (*harai*) or force (*makiotoshi*) the opponent's *kissaki* out of the way, thereby leaving the opponent with no recourse for attack.
2. *Seme* with *waza*- Take the initiative and attack your opponent first, thereby agitating them. This will also make them vulnerable and create openings.
3. *Seme* with *ki*- Overwhelming your opponent with a positive and vigorous spirit will dash their confidence, leaving them susceptible to attack. Keep these points in mind when you are training with *bogu*. A good understanding of these concepts will not only enhance your performance in matches, but will also lead to developing a strong, confident, and astute mind.

1- Shikake-waza

It is preferable to begin striking with *bogu* with *sune*. This way the practitioner will gradually get used to moving with armour attached.

Attacker	Receiver

Hidari & Migi-sune-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso*.

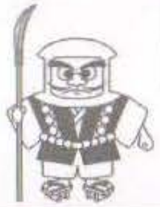
(2)'Shuffle back with *okuri-ashi* lifting the *naginata* up to reveal *sune*.

(3) Strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

(3)' Allow a strike to the outside of your left *sune*.

(4) *Mochikae* into *hasso* again, and strike the other *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

(4)' Draw your left foot back lifting up the *ishizuki* to allow the strike to the outside of the right *sune*. You should be facing the front.



Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

Important Points:

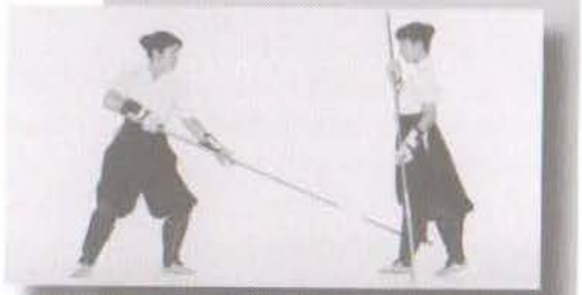
1. Practise moving in all directions rather than just in a straight line. The receiver always takes the initiative in controlling direction.
2. Make sure that you are relaxed when striking. Always maintain eye-contact and avoid the temptation to look down at the target.
3. Your feet and knees should be pointing in the direction of the target. You should be perfectly side-on at the completion of each strike.
4. Aim for the middle of the *sune-ate*.
5. Remember that you are trying to strike the target with your whole body, not just your hands. If you have too much power in your arms, the strike will be difficult to control and there is a high chance that you will strike your partner's knees or ankles.
6. If you do get struck accidentally, it is considered impolite to make an issue out of it. It may sting, but make every effort to bear the pain without showing it. Occasionally receiving an accidental strike on an uncovered part of the body is a fact of life in Naginata.

Furiage-sune-uchi

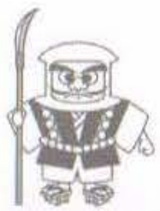
(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Lift the *naginata* overhead (*furiage*) while stepping forward from the back foot.

(2)'Step back lifting up the *ishizuki* or *ha-bu* end of the *naginata* to reveal the *sune-ate*.



(3) Strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).



Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

Important Points:

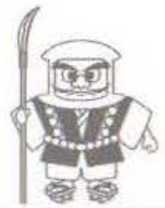
1. Practise striking from both *migi-chudan* and *hidari-chudan*.
2. When you lift the *naginata* overhead, the body should be facing forwards, and then rotated around to the side as the strike is made.
3. The receiver may receive the strikes on either *sune*, inside or outside.

E-bu-sune-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Step forward from the back foot and thrust the *ishizuki* end of the *naginata* out (*kuri-dashi*) as you pivot around to strike *sune*. (Shout *sune*).

(2)'Step back lifting up the *ishizuki* or *ha-bu* end of the *naginata* to reveal the *sune-ate*.

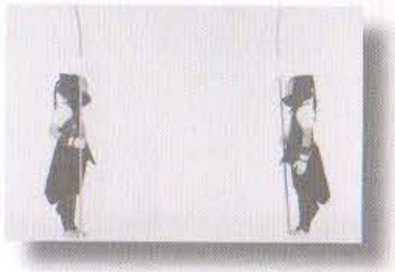


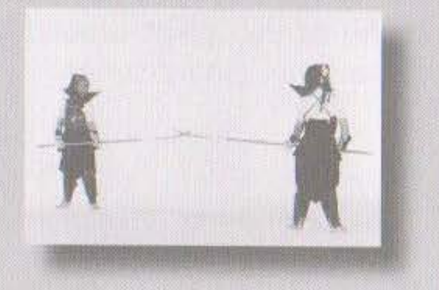
Important Points:

1. Practice striking from both *migi-chudan* and *hidari-chudan*.
2. The *motodachi* may receive the strikes on either *sune*, inside or outside.
3. Make sure that the strike is not too deep or shallow. The *monouchi* (20cm-25cm from the *ishizuki*) should make contact with the target.
4. As the *e-bu* is made from hard wood as opposed to bamboo, there is an increased danger of injuring your partner with a missed or overly forceful strike. Thus, only practitioners of a high level of technical proficiency and who are at least 16 years old should attempt this technique.
5. Power from the strike should come from the momentum gained through rotating the hips.
6. This technique is particularly effective from close-quarters while attempting to move away.(*Hiki-waza*).

After getting used to moving with the *sune-ate* and other pieces of armour, move to the next step and practise striking in full armour. It will take a while to get used to the *men*. It will feel awkward, but will become second-nature with practice.

From *shizentai* assume *ai-chudan*.

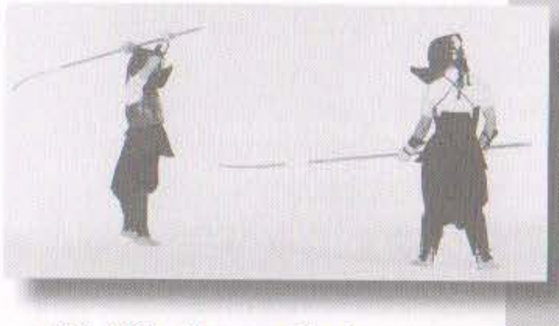




Attacker **Receiver**

Furiage-men-uchi

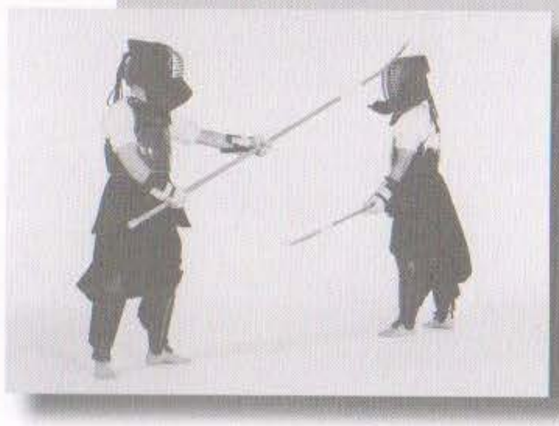
(1) From *ai-chudan*,



(2)'Step back dropping the *kissaki* of the *naginata* to reveal *men*.

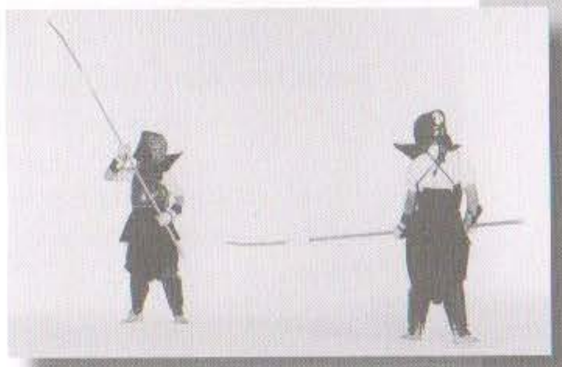
(2) Lift the *naginata* overhead (*furiage*) while stepping forward from the back foot.

(3) Strike *men*. (Shout *men*).



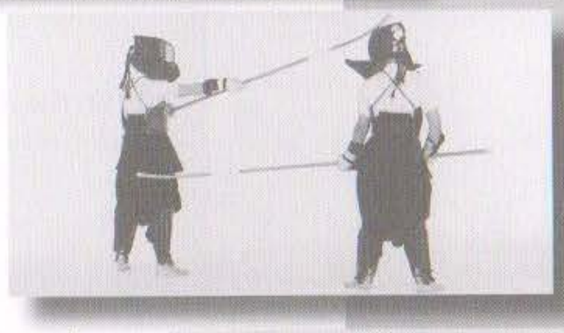
Sokumen-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,



(2) *Mochikae* into *hasso*.

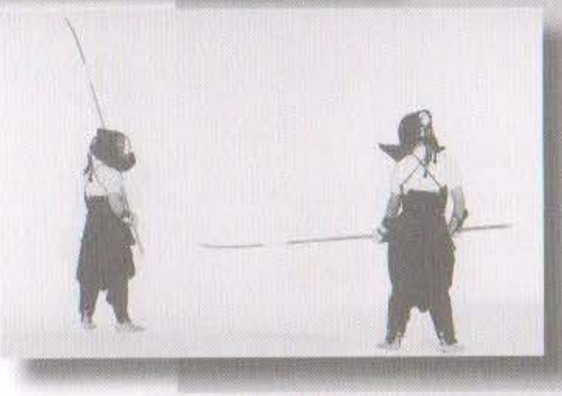
(2)' Move back and lower the *kissaki* to reveal *men*.



(3) Strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).

(4) *Mochikae* into *hasso*.

(4)' Move back with the *kissaki* lowered to reveal *men*.

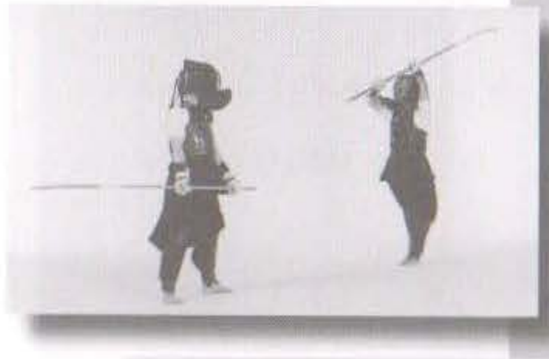


(5) Strike *sokumen*. (Shout *men*).

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

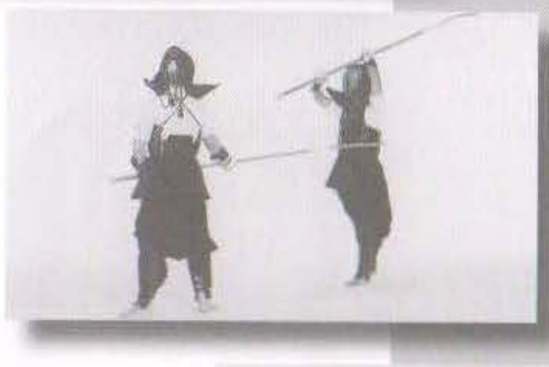
Do-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,



(2) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae*.

(2)' Move back and lift the *naginata* overhead revealing the *do*.

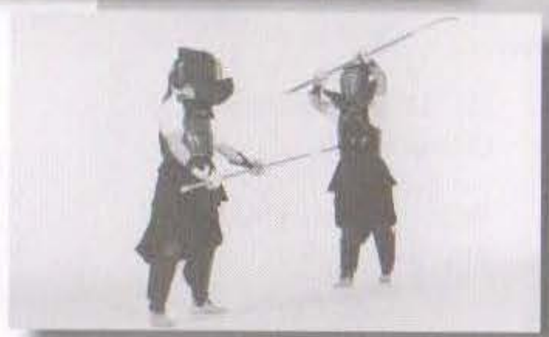


(3) Strike *do*. (Shout *do*).

(4) *Mochikae* into *wakigamae* and strike *do*. (Shout *do*).

(4)' Move back maintaining the same open posture.

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.



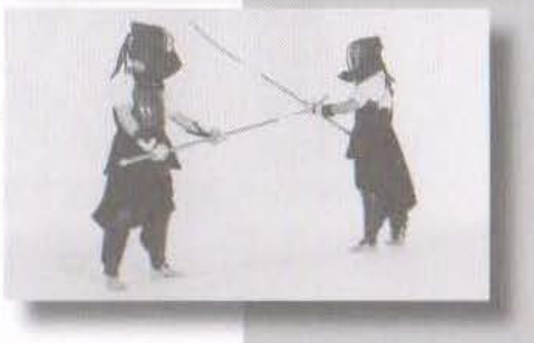
Kote-uchi

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Lift the *naginata* overhead (*furiage*) while stepping forward from the back foot.

(2)' Lift the *kissaki* up to the right to reveal the *kote*.

(3) Strike *kote*. (Shout *kote*).

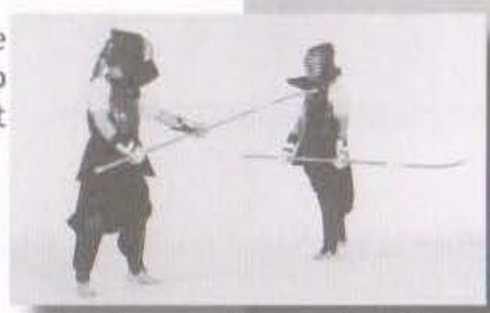


Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

Tsuki

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Twist the blade and step in as you thrust to the throat.



(2)' Drop the *kissaki* to the left, face the front and receive the thrust.

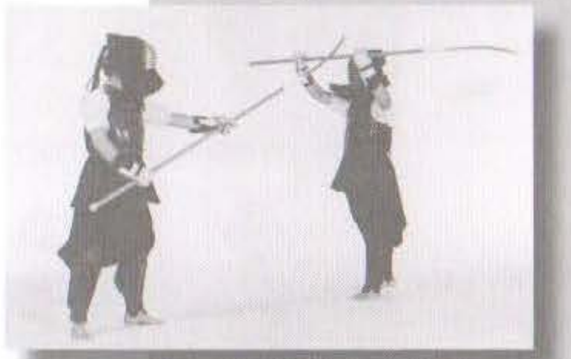
Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

2- Oji-waza

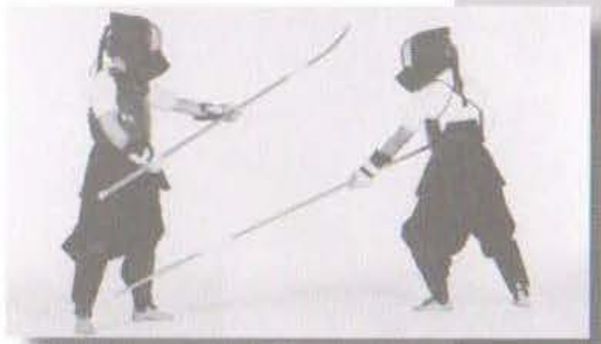
Men-uke-sune

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *men*.



(2)' Block *men*.



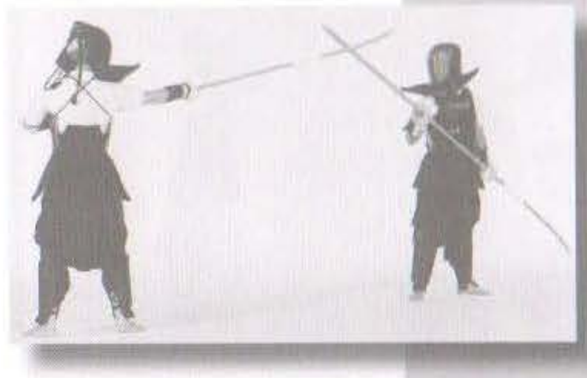
(3) Move forward to the left with *hiraki-ashi* and strike *sune*.

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

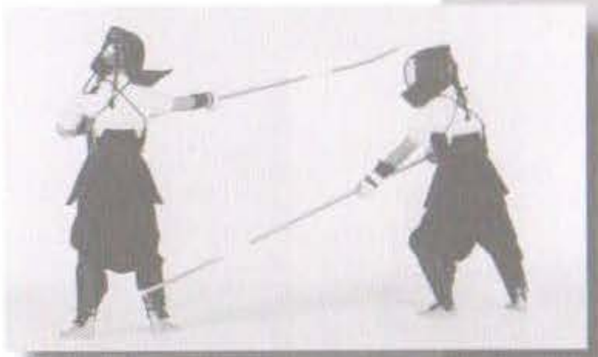
Sokumen-uke-sune

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *sokumen*.



(2)' Move back and block *men* with the *e-bu* or *ha-bu*.



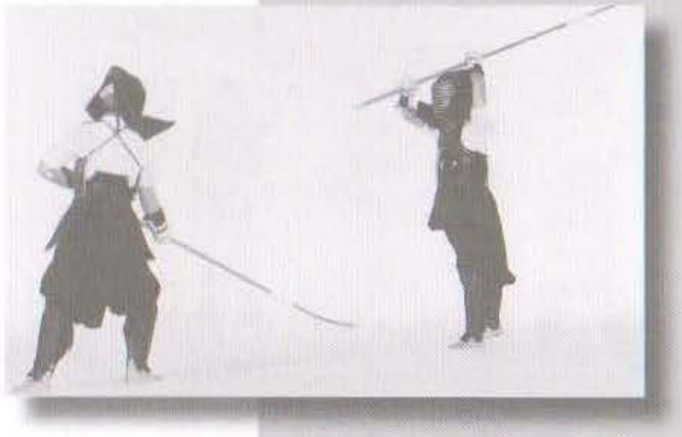
(3) Move forward with *hiraki-ashi* and strike *sune*.

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

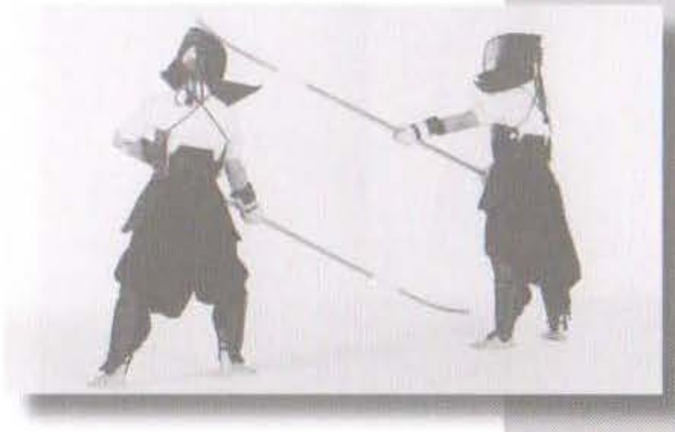
Sune-nuki-men

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *sune*.



(2)' Move back with *oku-ri-ashi* to avoid the strike (*nuki*).



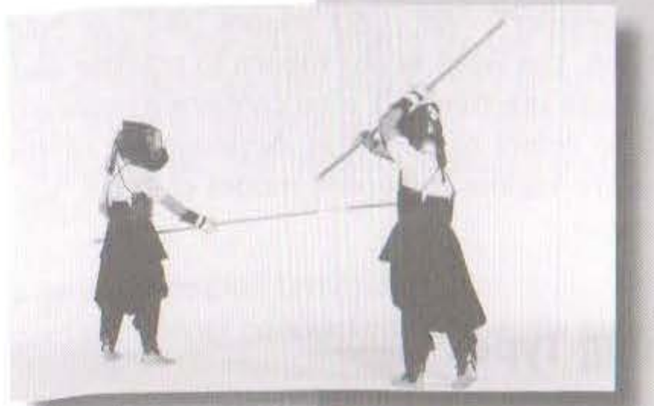
Move forward and strike *men*.

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

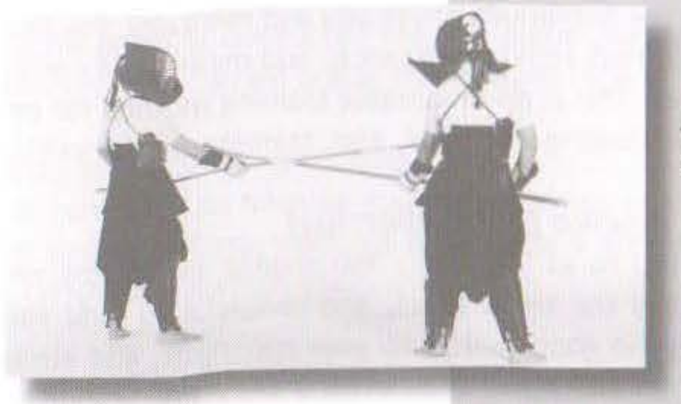
Do-nuki-kote

(1) From *ai-chudan*,

(2) Strike *do*.



(2)' Move back with *okuri-ashi* to avoid the strike (*nuki*).



Move forward and strike *kote*.

Return to *ai-chudan* and swap roles.

Part 4- Keiko Types & Attitude

Now we are ready to apply all the techniques in the previous lessons in a practical situation such as *shiai-geiko*.

For many centuries, the word used to describe the practise of the traditional martial arts is '*keiko*'. '*Kei*' (稽) means to "think about" or "consider". '*Ko*' (古) means "old", or "olden times". Thus combined, the word *keiko* means to practise and learn from the old ways and teachings. It also contains a nuance of 'development', and so refers to personal development of the mind and body. There are various different modes of *keiko*, each serving a distinct purpose.

1. Training Types

Kakari-geiko (Attack practise)

In *kakari-geiko* you must attack your training partner relentlessly, while they take the lead and encourage you to keep coming in. You should strive to try as many different *waza* and combinations as you can within the stipulated time. Do not stop attacking, even if your strikes are deflected or avoided. Even though you are exerting yourself to the maximum physically and mentally, you must aim to gage the correct striking distance, and maintain a correct posture at all times. This is an invaluable training method for perfecting your understanding of *ma-ai*, *kiai*, stamina, and grip etc.

Gokaku-geiko / Jigeiko (Free sparring)

This is also referred to as '*jigeiko*'. You engage in fighting with a partner of roughly the same level, and compete to land valid techniques. Recognise good strikes by your opponent, and always strive to learn from any opponent, even if they are technically inferior. Try not to overlook any openings in your opponent's defence.

Hikitate-geiko

This is training in the role as the receiver for *kakari-geiko*. You are in a position of instruction here, and it is your responsibility to encourage the attacker to bring out their best, and also help fix their flaws. '*Hikitate*' means to support, and you have to know how to help others in their training.

Shiai-geiko (Match practise)

This is where you apply all the techniques you have learned in a competitive situation. You must abide by the rules of Naginata competition, and match practise should be conducted with Shinpan (referees). Try to compete against as many different people as you can. In *shiai-geiko*, the instructor should try and let everybody participate.

Tokubetsu-geiko (Special training)

These are special trainings conducted for specific purposes:

Kan-geiko (Mid-winter training)

Kan-geiko training is traditionally conducted in the mornings of the coldest time of the year. The purpose is to gain mental strength and improve technique by training under extreme or adverse conditions. In this case, extreme cold.

Shochu-geiko (Mid-summer training)

Shochu-geiko is conducted for the same purposes as *kan-geiko*. However, it is carried out at the hottest time of the year instead.

Hitori-geiko (Solitary training)

It is beneficial to train by yourself at times to work on technique and strategy. If you work out in front of a mirror you will be able to check your *kamae*, etc.

Mitori-geiko (Observing)

You can always learn from watching other people train. Observe their individual styles and successful techniques and try to incorporate them into your own training later on.

2. Training Attitude

When training or participating in a match, the practitioner must endeavour to maintain a state of mind that is liberated from tenacious thoughts, and can thus respond to everything without being distracted by anything. This is called *hoshin*. Without *hoshin*, preoccupation of the mind prevents the hands and feet from moving freely, causing *waza* to stall and making one unable to respond flexibly. This is referred to as *shishin*. It is also important to remember that even though we have covered *shikake-waza* (attacking) and *oji-waza* (counter-attacking), offence and defence are inseparably combined. This is described by the term *ken-tai-itchi* (different to *ki-ken-tai-itchi*). Here, '*ken*' means to attack or strike the opponent, and '*tai*' means to wait while observing the opponent's movement calmly. In other words this is referring to the importance of always being mentally prepared and physically ready to defend while attacking, and counterattack while defending.

The ideal way of using the mind or body when facing an opponent in a match or during the course of training is expressed by the term *do-chu-sei*. This is the state where the mind calmly watches the opponent even though the body is moving rapidly in attack or defence. The contrasting term is *sei-chu-do*, which refers to the state where even though the body outwardly appears to be still, inwardly the mind is fully ready to respond at any time. (Refer to the AJKF Japanese English Dictionary).

3. Shiai Attitude

Before

1. Plan ahead so that you are peaking physically and mentally by the time of the match.
2. Have confidence in your ability, and work on some of your favourite techniques.
3. Always make sure that your equipment is in order.
4. Know beforehand what kind of match it is going to be.
5. When you know who your opponent is going to be try to find

out as much as you can about their style of Naginata, and work out a game plan.
6. Find out how to get to the venue, and what public transport is available.
7. Remain calm and composed, confirm your match court, and the time your matches will begin.
8. Warm up well, and try to relax.

During

1. Try your best to win the match.
2. Concentrate, and observe your opponent calmly.
3. Even if the odds seem against you, give it your best shot.
4. The harder it becomes the more effort that is required.
5. Try not to become engulfed by your opponent's pace. Take your time and stay composed.
6. Abide by the rules.
7. Always aim to get the first point.
8. Try to ignore the commotion of the spectators and supporters watching the match. Do not react to any comments made by a spectator.

After

1. Stay calm in victory and defeat. It is not considered good manners to jump up and down happily or to display any other such antics when you win a match.
2. Do not be arrogant, or openly complain about the referee's decisions.
3. Learn from each match, and try to improve in future matches.
4. Put your equipment away neatly.

4. Grading Examination Attitude

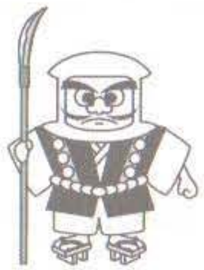
Attitude

1. You may decide to sit an examination of your own accord to test your progress, or you may have been advised to by your teacher. In either case, it is important when sitting a grading examination to keep an open mind and be as objective as possible.
2. When it comes time to sit the examination, try to relax and

do the best that you can.
3. If you pass, you have a responsibility to continue living up to the level expected of the grade you receive.
4. If you fail, you should endeavour to understand the reason why. Seek advice from your seniors, and continue to evaluate your own level of Naginata, both the strong points and your weaknesses. It is this process which enables the individual to progress.

Appearance & Equipment

1. Make sure that your equipment and attire is clean and in order. The *keiko-gi* must be clean and white, and the cords tucked on the inside.
2. You should be wearing an *obi* that is wrapped twice around the waist and tied in a bow or a knot at the back.
3. The pleats in the *hakama* should be straight and pronounced. It should be slightly raised at the back as it sits on top of the *obi* knot. Make sure that it is not too short or too long.
4. Always use a clean *tenugui*.
5. Fasten your equipment securely so that it doesn't come undone during the examination.
6. All the cords should be in good order and fastened neatly.
7. Always check that your *naginata* is safe, with no splinters in the bamboo, or splits in the *sendan-maki t*ape, and that the leather caps on the *kissaki* and *ishizuki* are secure.



Benkei's Pointers

All of the above should be aspired to in everyday training, not just for matches or examinations.

Good Luck!

Appendix 1:

Tournament Regulations

The following text is a slightly modified version of the official English match regulations. Although some of the wording has been changed for the sake of readability, the content is still the same as in the match regulations utilised by the INF as of 2005. However, there are some discrepancies between the English regulations and those now used by the AJNF, as modifications to the English translation have not kept up with the changes made to the Japanese rules over the last decade. The INF is looking to rectify this problem now, but at the time of publication the following rules are being used.

MATCH RULES AND REFEREEING

1. Match Rules
Match Area
Equipment
Kind and Method of Match
Match Time
Start Up, Finish, Suspension of Play, and *Encho*
Datotsu-bui (striking targets)
Yuko-datotsu (Valid strike)
Judging a Match
Hansoku (Foul)
Penalties
Match Officials
Igi (Lodging a Protest)

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ENGI RULES AND REFEREEING

***1. Engi* Rules**
Outline of *Engi*
Types of *Engi*
Method of *Engi*
The *Engi* Court
Equipment
Engi Time
Start Up, Finish, Suspension of *Engi*
Deciding Victory or Defeat
Igi (Lodging a Protest)

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

MATCH RULES AND REFEREEING

1. Match Rules

Match Area
ARTICLE 1. The match area (court) should be a 12x12 meter square. (See Fig. 1).

ARTICLE 2. An extra area of about 1 meter or wider from the boundary line should be provided outside the court

ARTICLE 3. The boundary lines should be marked by line tape 5 cm in width, and in principle should be white. The width of the tape shall be included in the length of each side.

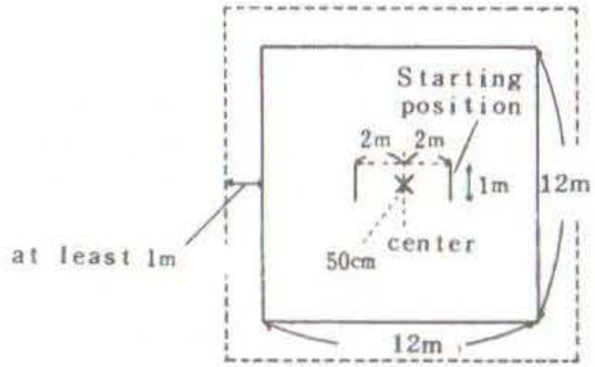


Fig.1 Match Area

Equipment
ARTICLE 4. The *naginata* used shall be the length, weight, and quality of that shown in Fig.2.

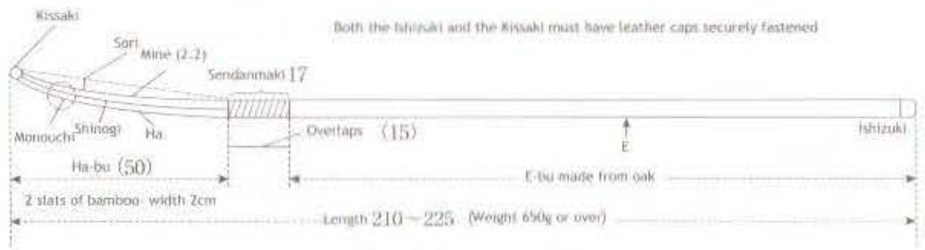


Fig. 2 The Naginata

ARTICLE 5. *Bogu* (protective equipment) used in Naginata refers to *men* (mask), *kote* (gauntlets), *do* (plastron), *tare* (waist protector), *sune-ate* (shin protectors), in a set.

ARTICLE 6. The costume consists of a white *keiko-gi* (jacket), secured with a white *obi* (sash) and a black or navy blue *hakama* (split-skirt).

Kind and Method of Match

ARTICLE 7. Individual's Match (*Kojin-sen*)

1. As a rule individual's matches shall be decided by *san-bon-shobu* (a match decided by 2 out of 3 points.)
2. In *san-bon-shobu*, the player who scores 2 points first within the given time shall be the winner. However, if one player only scores 1 point without allowing the other any point within the given time, the former shall be the winner.
3. In case a match is not decided within the given time, a prolongation (*encho*) may be used wherein the player who scores one point first shall be the winner. *Encho* can be played up to 3 times in the case the match is not decided within the set time. (After which the match is decided by *hantei*).

ARTICLE 8. Team Match (*Dantai-sen*)

1. A series of individual matches shall be performed in a pre-determined order to decide victory and defeat.
2. Depending on the conditions of the tournament, a match may be declared *hikiwake* (draw).
3. In a team match, the team with the majority of individual winners shall be the overall winner. If the number of individual match winners turns out to be equal, the team that has the higher number of points scored shall be the winner. Furthermore, if the number of points scored happens to be equal, 2 individuals representing their teams shall face off to decide the victor.

Match Time

ARTICLE 9. Match time shall be no longer than 5 minutes.

ARTICLE 10. *Encho* time shall be no longer than 2 minutes.

ARTICLE 11. The match will start with the announcement of "*Hajime*" (begin) by the Chief Referee (*Shushin*) and finish when the Time Keeper signals that time is up.

ARTICLE 12. Match time will be stopped in the following situations and will not resume until ordered so by the Chief Referee: The moment of the announcement of *yuko-datotsu* by the Chief Referee, in the case of an accident, *gogi* (Referees consultation), or any other stoppage ordered by a Referee.

ARTICLE 13. The time that it takes for the Chief Referee to break up *seri-ai* (close-quarters) shall be included in the match time.

Start Up, Finish, Suspension of Play, and *Encho*

ARTICLE 14. The match shall begin with the announcement of "*hajime*" (begin) by the Chief Referee.

ARTICLE 15. The match shall finish with the declaration of "*shobu-ari*" (victory decided), or "*hikiwake*" (draw) by the Chief Referee.

ARTICLE 16. The match shall be suspended in the event of accident or foul, etc., by the announcement of "*yame*" (stop) by the Chief Referee. If one of the competitors wants a stoppage she/he must obtain permission from the Chief Referee. In order to do this, the competitor must raise their hand and indicate the reason.

ARTICLE 17. *Encho* (time extension) can be used instead of *hikiwake* (draw) to decide a match. The prolongation of match time will begin with the Chief Referee's announcement of "*Encho, hajime*" (time extension, begin.) *Encho* can be conducted 3 times per match.

***Datotsu-bui* (Striking Targets)**

ARTICLE 18. *Datotsu-bui* (Striking targets):
Men (head) - *Shomen* (centre of the *men*); *Sokumen* (left and right men—between 25°-30° to the left and right of the centre of *shomen*); *Kote* (wrist/forearm)—left and right *kote*; *Do* (trunk)—

left and right sides of the plastron; *Sune* (shin)—left and right *sune*, inside left and right *sune*; *Tsuki* (to throat)—throat flap (prohibited until 18 years of age).

Yuko-datotsu (Valid Strike)

ARTICLE 19. *Yuko-datotsu* is defined as the accurate striking or thrusting made onto legitimate targets with the *naginata*'s *datotsu-bu* edge in high spirits with correct posture while at the same time shouting out the name of the target being aimed at with *zanshin*.

Striking Point	*Datotsu-bu* of the *naginata*
Men	15cm~20cm from the *kissaki* (*monouchi*)
Kote	Same as above
Do	Same as above
Sune	Same as above and also 15cm~20cm, from the *ishizuki*
Inko (tsuki)	*Kissaki* (thrusting with the *ishizuki* is now prohibited)

* *Tsuki* and *sune* with the *e-bu* should not be practised by high school students or below.

Judging a Match

ARTICLE 20. A *datotsu* (strike) shall become valid when 2 or 3 Referees make a motion indicating *yuko-datotsu*.

ARTICLE 21. *Gogi* (Referees' consultation) will become necessary when the validity of a *datotsu* is in question.

ARTICLE 22. A *datotsu* shall become valid in the following cases:

1. A strike that is made on an opponent who is retreating even if the strike is weak or light. Or, an accurate strike made by a retreating player.
2. Against a player who does not hold *kamae* after striking, slackens their spirit, or stops for no good reason during the match.

3. Against any player who has no intention of counter-attacking, and merely points the *naginata* at the opponent.
4. The first clear *datotsu* made on an opponent who has fallen over, or has dropped their *naginata*.
5. A *datotsu* made simultaneously to the time-up signal.

ARTICLE 23. In case of injury or accident the match shall be decided in the following way:

1. The opponent of the player who discontinues the match due to injury shall be awarded 2 points and declared the winner.
2. If the injured player refuses to carry on when the injuries are slight and it is feasible to continue, she/he shall forfeit the match.
3. If the match is unable to continue due to a clearly inflicted injury, the player who caused the injury shall be deemed the loser. If the cause of the accident is uncertain, the player who is unable to continue shall be the loser.
4. In a team match any player who cannot continue a match due to the above 3 situations, or has to withdraw for whatever reason, will not be permitted to participate in the tournament thereafter.

ARTICLE 24. If in a single match *encho* has been repeated 3 times, each of the Referees shall simultaneously make an integral decision (*hantei*) and one point will be awarded to the superior player.
Hantei criteria—the following elements should be taken into consideration when making a *hantei* decision:

1. Level of offence and defence.
2. Standard of posture and manner.
3. Number of fouls.

Hansoku (Foul)

ARTICLE 25. When a player insults or says something damaging to the opponent or referees.

ARTICLE 26. A *jogai* (out of bounds) foul will be called when one foot totally steps out of the match area, or both players step out of the match area at the same time, falls over with a part of body outside the area, or props the body up with the *naginata* outside the area line.

ARTICLE 27. Striking *men* with the *e-bu* (shaft) of the *naginata*, holding onto the opponent's *naginata* or holding it between any part of the body, intentionally hitting around the ear area or any area not protected by *bogu*, or any other dangerous behaviour.

ARTICLE 28. When a player unfairly pushes or shoves the opponent outside the match area, or stops for no good reason during the match.

ARTICLE 29. Remaining in *seri-ai* (close-quarters) with no intention of fighting, and ignoring the command to separate (*wakare*).

ARTICLE 30. When an unnecessary comment is uttered.

ARTICLE 31. Dropping the *naginata*, or when the *men* falls off.

Penalties

ARTICLE 32. The player that committed the foul play in ARTICLE 25 shall lose the match and be excluded from competing any further in the tournament, while the opponent shall be awarded 2 points.

ARTICLE 33. The player that committed the fouls outlined in ARTICLES 26~31 shall be penalised (*hansoku*) each time. If penalized 2 times, *ippon* (1 point) will be awarded to the opponent.

Match officials

ARTICLE 34. The match officials shall consist of the following: *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge); *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge); *Shinpan-in* (Referees); *Senshin-in* (Linesmen); *Tokei-gakari* (Time Keeper); *Keiji-gakari* (Scoreboard Keeper); *Kiroku-gakari* (Score Recorder); *Senshu-gakari* (Player Caller); *Hyoji-gakari* (Indicator).

ARTICLE 35. The *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge) shall make sure that the match rules are being abided by properly. Also the *Shinpan-cho* shall deal with matters that may not be clearly stipulated in the *Tournament Regulations.* The *Shinpan-cho* shall also handle any protests (*igi*) that are lodged.

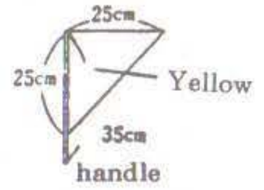
ARTICLE 36. In the case where there are 2 or more courts, a *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge) shall be appointed for each court to act as an assistant to the Chief Judge. The Court Judge shall be responsible to the Chief Judge for the refereeing at the court concerned.

ARTICLE 37. A team of 1 *Shushin* (Chief Referee) and 2 *Fukushin* (Sub Referees) shall decide on *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*; they shall have equal rights in any decision. The Chief Referee shall coordinate with the Sub Referees and the other officials ensure that a match proceeds smoothly, and shall make various announcements as required.

ARTICLE 38. There shall be in principle 2 *Senshin-in* (Linesmen) who will notify the Referees of any instance of *jogai* (players stepping out of bounds).

ARTICLE 39. There shall be in principle 1 head *Tokei-gakari* (Time Keeper) and 2 or more sub-keepers per court who shall gage the match time and give a signal at the end of the stipulated time.

Time keeper's flag



ARTICLE 40. There shall be in principle 1 head *Keiji-gakari* (Scoreboard Keeper) and 2 or more Sub-keepers per court who shall show the Referees' decisions on the score board correctly, and call out the players' names.

ARTICLE 41. There shall be in principle, 1 head *Kiroku-gakari* (Score Recorder) and 2 or more Sub-recorders per court who shall take a record of scores, *yuko-datotsu*, match time, *hansoku*, etc.

ARTICLE 42. There shall be in principle, 1 head *Senshu-gakari* (Player Caller) and 2 or more Sub-callers per court who shall call players and inspect their equipment in order to get a match to proceed without undue delays.

ARTICLE 43. There shall be in principle, one head *Hyoji-gakari* (Indicator) and 2 or more Sub-indicators who shall accurately indicate the Referees' decisions.

***Igi* (Lodging a Protest)**

ARTICLE 44. No one shall have the right to protest against the Referees' decision.

ARTICLE 45. A protest may be lodged in the event of a problem occurring that is not mentioned in the *Tournament Regulations*, or when there is a difference in opinion regarding interpretation of the rules. Also, a concerned party may lodge a complaint of improper conduct to the *Shinpan-cho* (*Shinpan-shunin*) before the next match begins.

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ARTICLE 1. The Referees shall decide the match according to the *Tournament Regulations* of the All Japan Naginata Federation.

ARTICLE 2. In principle, a match is judged by a team consisting of 1 Chief Referee and 2 Sub Referees.

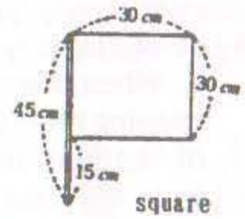
ARTICLE 3. The duty of the *Shinpan-in* (Referees) is to judge *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku* in the following way:

1. The decision for *yuko-datotsu* shall be based on fullness of spirit, correctness of posture while at the same time calling out the name of the *datotsu-bui* (target) being aimed for with *zanshin*.
2. The *Shushin* (Chief Referee) shall, with overall authority to administer a match assigned to her/him, position oneself suitably to be able to see both players equally, and motion and announce *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*, as well as final victory/defeat.
3. The *Fukushin* (Sub Referees) will, for the most part, stand opposite the Chief Referee in a good position to see the match, and will have equal authority and responsibilities to those of the Chief Referee in motioning *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*.

ARTICLE 4. Each Referee will make a motion of *yuko-datotsu* based on their own judgement. When 2 or more referees motion to signal *yuko-datotsu*, it shall become 1 valid point.

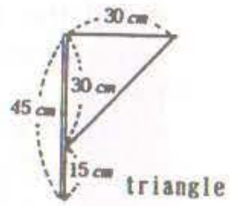
ARTICLE 5. The Referees shall indicate *yuko-datotsu* by the use of red/white flags.

Flag Measurements:
Length—30cm
Width—30cm
Length of handle—45cm
Diameter of handle—1cm



The Linesmen shall indicate *hansoku* by the use of red/white flags.

Flag Measurements:
Length—30cm
Width—30cm
Length of handle—45cm
Diameter of handle—1cm



ARTICLE 6. Referees shall observe the following points:

1. The Chief Referee shall start the match by announcing "*hajime*", when players are in full spirits after assuming *chudan-no-kamae*.
2. As soon as 1 referee motions *yuko-datotsu* or *hansoku*, the other 2 shall respond to it with their motions.
3. Referees shall upon discovery of *hansoku* stop the match and announce and motion "*hansoku*" clearly.
4. The Chief Referee shall, if a player falls over, or drops their *naginata*, stop the match if the opponent does not immediately attempt to strike, and return them back to starting positions for resumption of the match.
5. The Chief Referee shall break up *seri-ai* if it is dragging on with neither player attempting to fight, and immediately resume play on the spot.
6. The Chief Referee shall announce "*yame*", and return the players to starting positions in the case of: Stipulated match time ending; *hansoku*; accident; or any other situation in which the match has to be suspended. To resume the match, the Chief referee shall announce "*hajime*". If the match time must be extended (*encho*), the Chief Referee shall announce "*Encho, hajime.*"
7. Referees may decide victory/defeat by *gogi* (Referees' consultation).

8.Use of Flags:

a. When starting a match—stretch both flags out in front keeping them parallel to the floor, and at the announcement of "*hajime*" lower the flags.

b. In the case of *yuko-datotsu* the referee shall raise the appropriate flag 45° to the side.

c. When a referee decides that a *datotsu* is not *yuko*—contrary to the other referee's decision—the referee shall swing the flags crosswise 2~3 times with arms stretched downwards. The red flag should be in front of the white flag.

d. When announcing *yuko-datotsu* the Chief Referee shall do as in (b).

e. When a Referee announces a stoppage of a match—she/he shall raise both flags straight up as in (e).

f. When breaking up *seri-ai*—the Chief Referee will stretch both arms out either side parallel to the floor and announce "*wakare*" (break), then at the same time as announcing "*hajime*" bring the flags out in front and then drop them down the sides.

Note: Sub Referees, instead of the Chief Referee, may stop a match from proceeding in the case of emergency for hazard prevention, discovery of foul play, the end of match time etc. But only the Chief Referee shall resume the match by announcing "hajime."

g. In the case of *gogi*, the Chief Referee raises both flags straight up together in the right hand and announces "*gogi*" to which the Referees shall gather in the centre of the court.

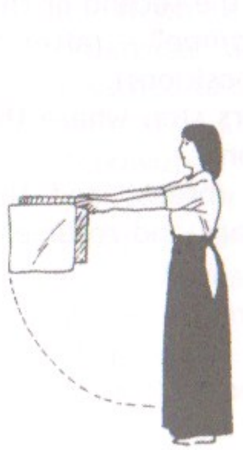
h. Linesman's indication-Linesman shall stand up holding up the red or white flag indicating which player committed *jogai* (stepping out of bounds.)

9. Manner of Announcement/Declaration:

a. Announcing the beginning of a match— "*Hajime*"—(when the 2 players are in full spirits after assuming *chudan-no-kamae*).

b. Announcing *yuko-datotsu*— "*Men/kote/do/sune/tsuki ari*".

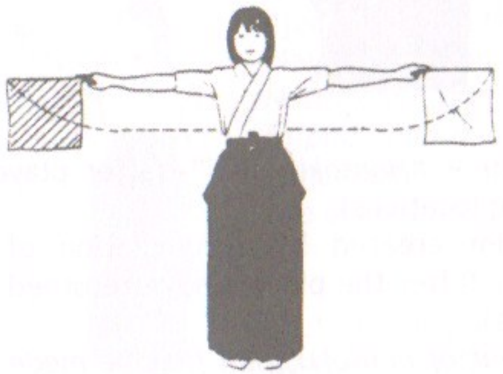
c. Announcing the start for a second point—"*Nihonme*" (after the competitors have returned to their starting locations).



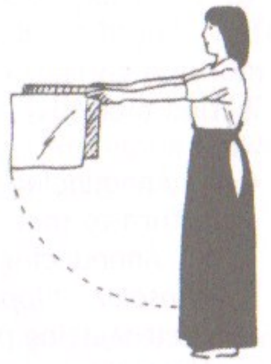
a. "Hajime"

b. "...Ari"
d. "Shobu"

e. "Yame"



f. "Wakare"



"Hajime"

d. Announcing the beginning of the final point (when each competitor has 1 point each)— "*Shobu*"—(after the competitors have returned to their starting positions).

e. Announcing victory/defeat— "*Shobu ari*" (victory decided) — (after the players have returned to their starting positions).

f. Announcing a single point victory— "*Ippon-gachi shobu-ari*" (victory decided by a single point) — (after players

have returned to their starting positions).
g. Announcing a prolongation of a match– "*Encho hajime*" – (after the players have returned to their starting positions). When *encho* is repeated for the second or third time, announce "*encho nikai/sankai, hajime*" – (after the players have returned to their starting positions).
h. Stopping a match– "*Yame*"– (players stop where they are, then return to their starting locations).
i. In the case of *seri-ai*– "*Wakare*" (break) and then "*Hajime*" – (players stay where they are and resume on the spot).

j. "Hansoku....kai"

j. Announcing *hansoku* – "*Hansoku ...kai*"–(after players return to their starting locations).
k. Announcing a point created by accumulation of 2 *hansoku*– "*Ippon ari*"–(after the players have returned to their starting positions).
Note: An announcement of hansoku shall first be made to the violator and then an announcement is made awarding the opponent ippon.
l. Announcing victory/defeat after a point gained through *hansoku*– "*Shobu ari*"–(after the players have returned to their starting positions).
Note: An announcement of "hansoku nikai" shall first be made to the violator and then "ippon ari, shobu ari" (one point gained–victory decided) shall be announced in favour of the opponent.
m. When a player requests to stop the match– "*Yame*".

Note: The Chief Referee shall raise both flags straight up and announce "yame", and then ask the reason for requesting stoppage.
n. When a match is not decided– "*Hikiwake*" (draw) – (after players have returned to starting positions).
Note: The Chief Referee shall announce "hikiwake" with the 2 flags crossed overhead. (The red flag should be in front of the white).
o. In the case of *hantei* (decision of a winner when points are even)– "*hantei, shobu ari*"– (after players have returned to starting positions).
Note: Upon the announcement of hantei by the Chief Referee, all the referees shall simultaneously raise the applicable flag, and the Chief Referee shall announce "shobu ari".

n. "Hikiwake"

p. In the case where one player is to be ejected from the match– "*Taijo*"– (after players have returned to starting positions).
Note: The Chief Referee will hold both flags in one hand and point to the violator while announcing "taijo, shobu ari" in favour of the opponent.

p. "Taijo"

10. Until the *yuko-datotsu* has been announced by the Chief Referee, the Sub Referees must not lower their flags.

ARTICLE 7. Referees shall handle matters other than those discussed in the preceding articles in mutual consultation subject to the approval of Court Judge or Chief Judge.

ENGI RULES AND REFEREEING

1. Engi Rules

Outline of *Engi*

ARTICLE 1. Aim to encourage the diffusion and development of correct Naginata. *Engi* shall be conducted in a stipulated match area, with groups consisting of 2 players competing by performing sequences of *waza*.

Types of *Engi*

ARTICLE 2. The types of *Engi* shall be All Japan Naginata Federation *Kata*, and *Shikake-Oji*.

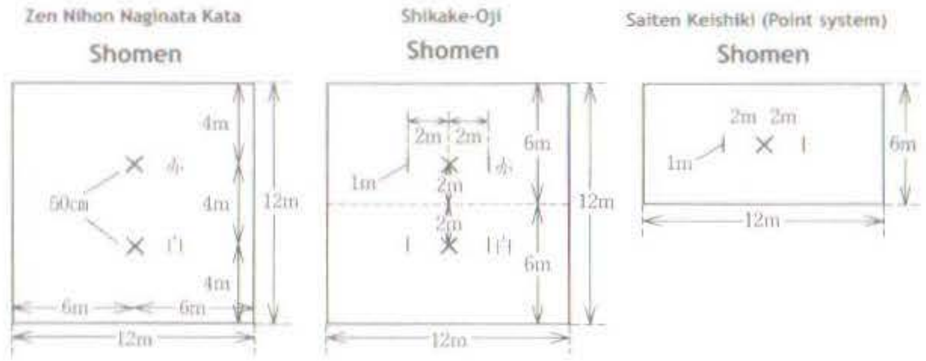
Method of *Engi*

ARTICLE 3. The methods for deciding victory in *Engi* are *hata-keishiki* (decision by raising flags), and *saiten-keishiki* (decision by point scoring).

1. The forms to be contested will be designated from *Kata* or *Shikake-Oji*.
2. With *hata-keishiki*, merits and demerits shall be indicated with the Referees' red/white flags.
3. With *saiten-keishiki*, merits and demerits shall be decided by the Referees' marking. If the players go over or under the stipulated performance time, they will lose points.

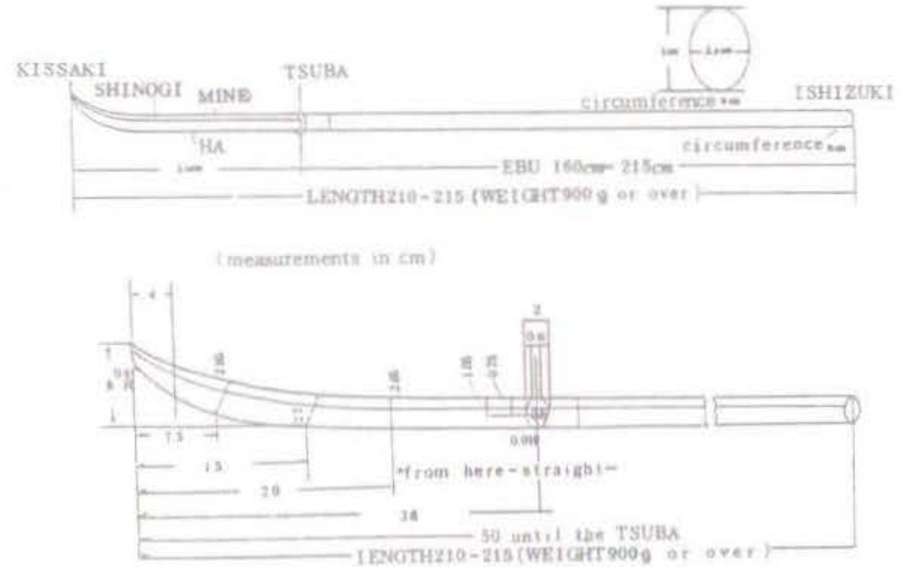
Engi Court

ARTICLE 4. The *Engi* court should be the same as in the following diagram. An area of 1 meter or more should be provided outside the court. The boundary lines shall be made by use of white tape 5cm in width, and shall be inclusive of the total length of the court.



Equipment

ARTICLE 5. *Kata* shall be performed with the All Japan Naginata Federation *naginata*, and *Shikake-Oji* with the *Shiai naginata*.



ARTICLE 6. The clothing used shall be a white *keiko-gi* (jacket) tied up with a white *obi* (sash), and a black or navy blue *hakama* (split-skirt).

Engi Time

ARTICLE 7. The time for *saiten-keishiki* shall depend on the assignment, and will begin and end with the Chief referee's signal.

ARTICLE 8. The time required for stoppage due to accident, or breakage of a *naginata* shall be included in the performance time.

Start Up, Finish, Suspension of *Engi*

ARTICLE 9. *Engi* shall start with the signal for *nyujo* (enter court), and finish when all the competitors have exited the court.

ARTICLE 10. In case of accident, the Chief Referee shall suspend

the match by signalling *yame*. This shall be carried out at the beginning of a sequence of *waza*.

Deciding Victory or Defeat
ARTICLE 11. In *hata-keishiki*, victory/defeat shall be decided by the majority of the 5 Referees' decisions. In *saiten-keishiki*, rankings are decided by the scores of 5 referees. (Precision of time should also be taken into account when scoring).

ARTICLE 12. The *Engi* officials shall consist of the following:
Shinpan-cho (Chief Judge); *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge);
Shinpan-in (Referees); *Tokei-gakari* (Time Keeper);
Keiji-gakari (Scoreboard Keeper); *Kiroku-gakari* (Score Recorder);
Senshu-gakari (Player Caller); *Hyoji-gakari* (Indicator).

1. *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge) – shall make sure that *Engi* rules are abided by. The *Shinpan-cho* shall deal with matters that may not be codified in the rule book, and also handle any complaints that are lodged.
2. There shall be 5 Referees including 1 Chief Referee.
3. There shall be in principle 1 *Tokei-gakari* (Time Keeper) and 2 or more Sub-keepers who shall measure and record the *Engi* time, and inform the *Kiroku-gakari* (Score Recorder).
4. There shall be in principle 1 head *Kiroku-gakari* (Score Recorder) and 4 or more Sub Recorders who shall collect the marking forms from the 4 Sub Referees and hand them to the Chief Referee. After final examination, they shall record the final scores and times, and check that they are exact.
5. There shall be in principle 1 head *Keiji-gakari* (Scoreboard Keeper) and 2 or more Sub-recorders who shall call out the players' names, and accurately show the Referees' decisions on the score board.
6. There shall be in principle 1 head *Senshu-gakari* (Player Caller) and 2 or more Sub-callers who shall call players and inspect equipment in order to get *Engi* to proceed without undue delays.
7. There shall be in principle 1 head *Hyoji-gakari* (indicator) and 2 or more Sub Indicators who shall accurately indicate the Referees' decisions.

Igi (Protesting)
ARTICLE 13. Nobody shall have the right to protest against the Referees' decision.

ARTICLE 14. A protest may be lodged in the event of a problem occurring that is not mentioned in the rule book, or when there is a difference in opinion in the interpretation of the rules. Also the person concerned may lodge a complaint of improper conduct to the *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge), *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge) before the next *Engi* begins.

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ARTICLE 1. The Referees shall decide placings according to the All Japan Naginata Federation rules.

ARTICLE 2. There shall be in principle 1 Chief Referee with 4 Sub Referees.

ARTICLE 3. The duties of the *Shinpan-in* (Referees) shall be as follows:
1. The Referees must judge the players fairly on the quality of their technique, fullness of spirit, and the correctness of posture.
2. In *hata-keishiki*, placings shall be decided by the majority of Referees' decisions. At the end of the *Engi* match the Referees shall indicate their decisions at the signal from the Chief Referee. (Blow of a whistle.)
3. In *saiten-keishiki* the referees shall gather with the Chief Referee and discuss their point crediting after the first *Engi* match has been completed to confirm consensus. From then on the Referees shall fill out and submit score sheets to the Chief Referee.
4. The Chief Referee shall check the difference in scores on the submitted score sheets. If the scores are varied, the Chief Referee's score shall become the basis, and even if *Engi* is in progress, a meeting may be held. If a meeting of the referees fails to form an agreement in opinion, the matter shall be handled by the Chief Judge.
5. If a Sub Referee makes a biased or unfair judgement, the Chief Referee must give a warning.

ARTICLE 4. In order to mark accurately and simply the following rules shall apply:
1. *Engi* shall be judged as the best out of 10 points.
2. The interpretation of *Engi* rules must be accurate and in agreement.
3. Scoring shall be based on clothing, attitude spirit, voice, breathing, *te-no-uchi* (grip), *datotsu* (striking), *ma-ai*, posture, position of hands, *zanshin*, and accuracy. If there are any faults in any of these aspects, 0.1 points will be deducted for each fault. In case of a major mistake 1 point will be deducted each time. The deducted points will be subtracted from the initial 10 points.

ARTICLE 5. The final score shall be decided from the average of the 5 Referees' scores, and also from the accuracy of the time. If the timing is not perfect, 0.I points shall be deducted for every 5 seconds out (under or over).

ARTICLE 6. The announcement of the score shall be done in the following manner:
The higher score shall be superior. If the scores are equal, the Chief Referee's scoring shall become the basis, and the Referees shall hold *gogi* (Referees' consultation).

Appendix 2:

Updated Tournament Regulations

The following text is an UNOFFICIAL translation of the most recent Tournament Regulations being currently utilised by the AJNF (from April, 2002). The INF is looking to update outdated English Regulations now, but at the time of the publication of this book, the Regulations reproduced in Appendix 1 are still in use.

SHIAI KYOGI RULES AND REFEREEING

1. *Shiai Kyogi* (Match) Rules
Match Outline
Match Types
Match Method
Match Area
Equipment
Match Time
Beginning, Finishing, Suspension, and *Encho*
Requesting Stoppage of a Match
Datotsu-bui (Striking Targets)
Yuko-datotsu (Valid Strike)
Judging a Match
Hansoku (Foul)
Penalties
Match Officials
Igi (Lodging a Protest)

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ENGI KYOGI RULES AND REFEREEING

1. *Engi Kyogi* Rules
Outline of *Engi*
Types of *Engi*
Method of *Engi*
Engi Court
Equipment
Engi Time
Beginning, Finishing, and Suspension of *Engi*
Datotsu-bui (Striking Targets)
Deciding Victory/ Defeat or Ranking
Engi Officials
Igi (Protesting)

2. *Shinpan* Rules

SHIAI KYOGI RULES AND REFEREEING

1. *Shiai Kyogi* (Match) Rules

Match Outline
ARTICLE 1. A Naginata match shall be conducted in a stipulated area, with 2 competitors (*shiaisha*), each holding a *naginata*, who compete to score valid points on each other by successfully striking designated target areas.

Match Types
ARTICLE 2. Naginata matches consist of Individual's matches (*Kojin-shiai*) and Team's matches (*Dantai-shiai*).

Match Method
ARTICLE 3. Individual's Matches
1. As a rule, Individual's matches shall be decided by *san-bon-shobu* (a match decided by 2 out of 3 points).
2. The competitor who scores 2 points first within the given time shall be the winner. However, if a competitor only scores 1 point without allowing the other any point within the given time, the former shall be the winner.
3. In case a match is not decided within the given time as both competitors have 1 point each, or no points have been scored by either, a prolongation of the match (*encho*) may be used wherein the competitor who scores 1 point first shall be the winner.

If the match is still not decided within the set time for *encho*, it will decided by *hantei* (Referees' decision). However, depending on the kind of match, it may also be declared *hikiwake* (draw).

ARTICLE 4. Team's Matches
1. A series of individual matches shall be performed in a pre-determined order to decide victory and defeat.
2. The team with the majority of individual winners shall be the overall winner. If the number of individual match winners is equal, the team that has the higher number of points scored shall be the winner. Furthermore, if the number of points scored

happens to be equal, 1 individual representing each team shall face off to decide the victor (*daihyo-sen*).
3. Depending on the conditions of the tournament, a match may be declared *hikiwake* (draw).

Match Area

ARTICLE 5. The match area (court) should be a 12x12 meter square (see Fig. 1).

ARTICLE 6. An extra area of 2 meters or wider from the boundary line should be provided outside the court.

ARTICLE 7. The boundary lines should be white with each line 5 cm in width. The length of each side should be measured from the outer edge of the line.

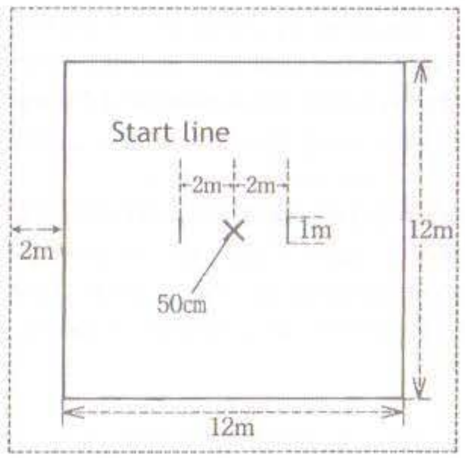


Fig. 1 Match Court

Equipment

ARTICLE 8. The *naginata* used shall be the length, weight, and materials of that shown in Fig.2. The shaft (*e-bu*) should be oval in shape.

Fig. 2 Structure of the Naginata

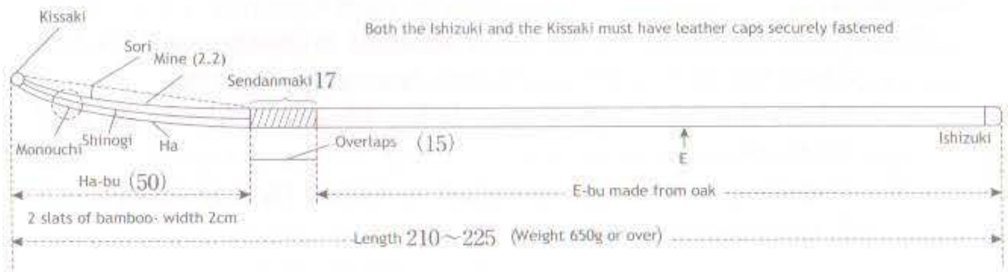


Fig. 4

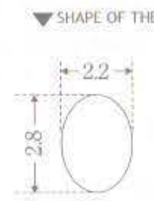


Fig. 3

- The *naginata* should not be coloured or engraved.
- The *kissaki* should be softened and rounded by inserting cloth under the leather.
- The *sendanmaki* should be made by wrapping (overlapping) white plastic tape for 15cm, and 1cm of tape at each end to anchor it, thus making the total length 17cm.

ARTICLE 9. *Bogu* (protective equipment) used in Naginata refers to *men* (mask), *kote* (gauntlets), *do* (plastron), *tare* (waist protector), and *sune-ate* (shin protectors).

ARTICLE 10. The attire shall consist of a white *keiko-gi* (jacket), secured with a white *obi* (sash), and a black or navy blue *hakama* (split-skirt).

Match Time

ARTICLE 11. Match time shall be no longer than 5 minutes.

ARTICLE 12. *Encho* time shall, in principle, be no longer than 2 minutes.

ARTICLE 13. The match will commence with the announcement of "*Hajime*" (begin) by the Chief Referee (*Shushin*), and finish when the Time Keeper (*Tokei-iin*) signals that time is up.

ARTICLE 14. Match time will be stopped in the following situations:

1. From the time when *yuko-datotsu* is announced by the Chief Referee until the match is resumed again.
2. When the match is stopped due to an accident, or *gogi* (Referees consultation).
3. The time form when a match is halted by a Referee until it is resumed again.

ARTICLE 15. The time that it takes for the Chief Referee to break up *seri-ai* (close-quarters) with the command "*Wakare*" shall be included in the match time.

Beginning, Finishing, Suspension, and *Encho*

ARTICLE 16. The match shall begin with the announcement of "*Hajime*" (begin) by the Chief Referee.

ARTICLE 17. The match shall finish with the declaration of "*Shobu Ari*" (victory decided), or "*Hikiwake*" (draw) by the Chief Referee.

ARTICLE 18. The match shall be suspended in the event of foul play (*hansoku*), or accident etc., by the announcement of "*Yame*" (stop) by the Chief Referee.

ARTICLE 19. *Encho* (time extension) will be used when victory and defeat is not decided in the initial match time. The prolongation of match time will begin with the Chief Referee's announcement of "*Encho-Hajime*" (Time extension-Begin).

Requesting Stoppage of a Match

ARTICLE 20. A competitor may request stoppage of a match if they are unable to continue due to an accident or some other reason. She/he must obtain permission from the Chief Referee by raising their hand and indicating the reason.

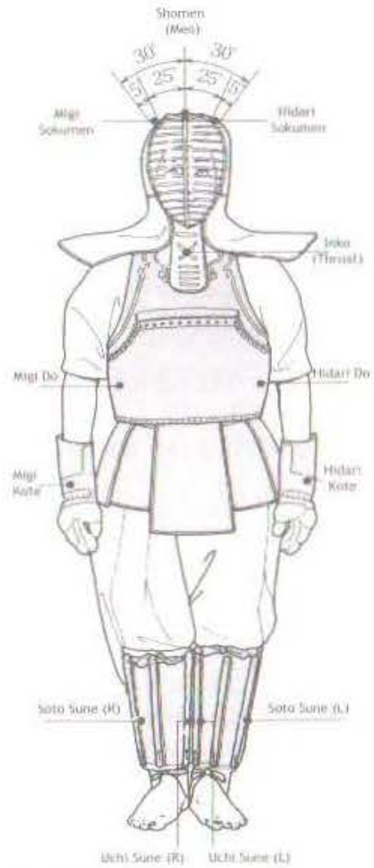
Datotsu-bui (Striking Targets)

ARTICLE 21. *Datotsu-bui* (Striking targets)

- *Men* (head) – *Shomen* (centre of the *men*); *Sayu-sokumen* (left and right men—between 25°-30° to the left and right of the *shomen*).
- *Kote* (forearm)—left and right *kote* (5cm from the wrist).
- *Do* (trunk)—left and right sides of the plastron.
- *Sune* (shin)—left and right *sune*, inside left and right *sune* (the section between the knee and ankle).
- *Inko* (thrust (*tsuki*) to the throat)—throat flap (prohibited until 18 years of age- High school and below).

Yuko-datotsu (Valid Strike)

Fig. 5 Targets



Target Areas (Datotsu-Bui)

ARTICLE 22. *Yuko-datotsu* is defined as the accurate striking or thrusting made onto legitimate targets with the *naginata*'s *datotsu-bu* edge, in high spirits, with correct posture, while at the same time shouting out the name of the target being aimed at, and demonstrating *zanshin*.

Targets	*Datotsu-bu* of the *naginata*
Men	15cm–20cm from the *kissaki* (*monouchi*)
Kote	Same as above
Do	Same as above
Sune	Same as above, and also with the *e-bu* (shaft) 20cm–25cm from the *ishizuki*
Inko (tsuki)	*Kissaki* (thrusting with the *ishizuki* is now prohibited)

* *Tsuki* and *sune* with the *e-bu* should not be executed by high school students or below.

Judging a Match

ARTICLE 23. A *datotsu* (strike) shall become valid when at least 2 Referees make a motion indicating *yuko-datotsu*.

ARTICLE 24. *Gogi* (Referees' consultation) will become necessary when the validity of a strike or *hansoku* (foul) is in question, or in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

ARTICLE 25. A strike (*datotsu*) shall become valid and called *ippon* (1 point) in the following cases:

1. An accurate strike that is made on an opponent who is retreating, even if the strike is weak or light. Or, an accurate strike made by a retreating player.
2. An accurate strike against a player who does not hold *kamae*, slackens their spirit, or stops after making a strike.
3. An accurate strike made against a player who has no intention of attacking, and merely holds the *naginata* on the opponent.
4. The first accurate strike made on an opponent who has dropped their *naginata*, or who has fallen over.
5. An accurate strike made simultaneously to the time-up signal.

ARTICLE 26. In case of injury or accident the match shall be decided in the way stipulated below, and 2 points will be awarded to the opponent. However, only 1 point will be awarded (to the opponent) if 1 point has already been scored. If the defeated competitor has scored 1 point, that point will remain valid.

1. The opponent of the competitor who defaults shall be awarded 2 points and declared the winner.
2. If the injured competitor refuses to carry on when the injuries are slight and it is feasible to continue, she/he shall forfeit the match.
3. If the match is unable to continue due to a clearly inflicted injury, the competitor who caused the injury shall be deemed the loser. If the cause of the accident is uncertain, the competitor who is unable to continue shall be the loser.
4. In a team match any competitor who cannot continue a match due to the above 3 situations, or has to withdraw for whatever reason, will not be permitted to participate in the tournament thereafter.

ARTICLE 27. If a match is not decided in the stipulated time, each of the Referees shall simultaneously make an integral decision (*hantei*) and 1 point will be awarded to the superior competitor. *Hantei* criteria—the following elements should be taken into consideration when making a *hantei* decision:

1. Level of offence and defence demonstrated.
2. Standard of posture and manner.
3. Number of fouls committed.

***Hansoku* (Foul)**

ARTICLE 28. When a player is insulting, or says something disrespectful to the opponent or referees.

ARTICLE 29. A *jogai-hansoku* (out of bounds foul) will be called in the following circumstances:

1. When one foot totally steps out of the match area. If both competitors step out of bounds, the first one will be penalised, or both competitors if they step out of the match area at exactly the same time.
2. When a player falls over with a part of the body outside the area.
3. When a player props the body up with the *naginata* outside the match area.

ARTICLE 30. The following actions will be penalised:

1. Striking *men* with the *e-bu* (shaft) of the *naginata*.
2. Intentionally hitting around the ear, or any area not protected by *bogu*.
3. Holding onto the opponent's *naginata*, or clamping it between some part of the body.
4. Excessive pushing or any other needless behaviour which stops the match.
5. Showing no will to fight by remaining in close-quarters, or ignoring referee calls to separate (*wakare*).
6. Superfluous remarks or utterances.
7. Dropping the *naginata*.
8. When a piece of *bogu* comes untied and falls off.
9. Actions considered dangerous in any way.
10. Any other forbidden acts.

Penalties

ARTICLE 31. The competitor who commits the foul play stipulated in ARTICLE 28 shall be expelled from the match (*taijo*) and the opponent shall be awarded 2 points. If the opponent already has 1 point, an extra 1 point will be awarded. The expelled competitor will not be allowed to participate any further in the tournament.

ARTICLE 32. The competitor that committed the fouls outlined in ARTICLES 29~30 shall be penalised (*hansoku*) each time. If penalised 2 times, *ippon* (1 point) will be awarded to the opponent.

Match Officials

ARTICLE 33. The match officials shall consist of the following: *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge); *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge); *Shinpan-in* (Referees); *Senshu-iin* (Competitor Callers); *Tokei-iin* (Time Keepers); *Hyoji-iin* (Indicators); *Saiten-keiji-iin* (Scoreboard Keepers); *Kiroku-iin* (Recorders); *Keiryo-yogu-iin* (Equipment Checkers), and so on.

ARTICLE 34. The *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge) will make sure that the match rules are being abided by properly. Also, the *Shinpan-cho* shall deal with matters that may not be clearly stipulated in the *Tournament Regulations*. The *Shinpan-cho* shall also handle any protests (*igi*) that are lodged.

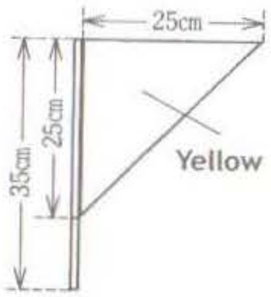
ARTICLE 35. In the case where there are 2 or more courts, a *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge) shall be appointed to each court to act as an assistant to the Chief Judge. The Court Judge is responsible to the Chief Judge for the refereeing at the court concerned.

ARTICLE 36. A team of 1 *Shushin* (Chief Referee) and 2 *Fukushin* (Sub Referees) shall decide on *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*. The Chief Referee shall declare the match outcome, and coordinate with the Sub Referees and the other officials ensure that the match proceeds smoothly.

ARTICLE 37. There shall be 1 head *Senshu-iin* (Competitor Caller) and 2 or more Sub Callers per court, who call competitor and inspect their equipment in order to get a match to proceed without undue delays. In the case of a *daihyosha-sen* (playoff between 1 representative from each team), the *Senshu-iin* will register the names of the representatives.

ARTICLE 38. There shall be 1 head *Tokei-iin* (Time Keeper) and 2 or more Sub Keepers per court, who gage the match time and give a signal at the end of the stipulated time. Stoppage of match time

Fig. 6 Time Keeper's Flag



and the end of match time will be indicated with a yellow flag.
ARTICLE 39. There shall be 1 head *Hyoji-iin* (Indicator) and 2 or more Sub Indicators per court, who accurately indicate the Referees' decisions.

ARTICLE 40. There shall be 1 head *Saiten-keiji-iin* (Scoreboard Keeper) and 2 or more Sub Scoreboard Keepers per court, who call out the competitors names before the match, and clearly mark the Referees' calls on the scoreboard.

ARTICLE 41. There shall be 1 head *Kiroku-iin* (Score Recorder) and 2 or more Sub Recorders per court, who take a record of the number and type of *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*, match time, and so on.

ARTICLE 42. There shall be 1 head *Keiryo-yogu-iin* (Equipment Checkers) and 2 or more Sub Checkers, who check *naginata* length, weight, *sori* (curvature of the blade), the leather cap on the *kissaki*, and so on, before the outset of matches.

Igi (Lodging a Protest)
ARTICLE 43. No one shall have the right to protest against the Referees' decisions.

ARTICLE 44. A protest may be lodged in the event of a problem occurring that is not covered in the *Tournament Regulations*, or when there is a difference in opinion regarding interpretation of the rules. Also, a concerned party may lodge a complaint of improper conduct to the *Shinpan-cho* (*Shinpan-shunin*) before the next match begins.

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ARTICLE 1. The Referees shall decide the match according to the *Tournament Regulations* of the All Japan Naginata Federation.

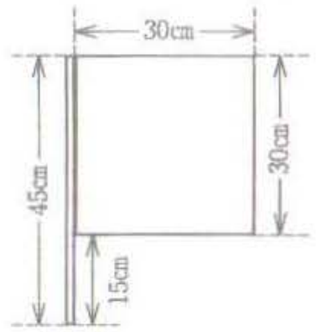
ARTICLE 2. In principle, a match is judged by a team consisting of 1 Chief Referee (*Shushin*) and 2 Sub Referees (*Fukushin*).

ARTICLE 3. The duty of the *Shinpan-in* (Referees) is to judge *yuko-datotsu* (valid strikes).

ARTICLE 4. The Referees shall indicate *yuko-datotsu* by the use of red/white flags.

Fig. 7 Referee's Flag

Flag Measurements:
Length—30cm
Width—30cm
Length of handle—45cm
Diameter of handle—1cm



ARTICLE 5. *Yuko-datotsu* will be judged in the following manner:
1. The *Shushin* (Chief Referee) shall, with overall authority to administer a match assigned to her/him, position themselves suitably to be able to see both competitors equally, and motion with the flags and announce *yuko-datotsu*, *hantei*, as well as declare final victory/defeat.
2. The *Fukushin* (Sub Referees) will generally stand opposite the Chief Referee in a good position to see the match, and will have equal authority and responsibilities to those of the Chief Referee in motioning *yuko-datotsu* and *hansoku*, and assist the Chief Referee in administrating the match.

ARTICLE 6. Each Referee will make a motion of *yuko-datotsu* based on their own judgement. When 2 or more Referees motion that *yuko-datotsu* was scored, it shall become 1 valid point.

ARTICLE 7. Referees shall observe the following points:

1. The Chief Referee will start the match by announcing "*Hajime*", when players are in full spirits after assuming *chudan-no-kamae*.
2. When 1 Referee motions *yuko-datotsu*, the other 2 must respond by indicating their opinions.
3. Upon discovery of *hansoku*, the match will be stopped and the Chief Referee will order the competitors to return to the staring lines. The Chief Referee will declare the foul and indicate it clearly, and then restart the match.
4. If a competitor falls over, the Chief Referee shall stop the match if the opponent does not immediately attempt to strike, and return both back to the starting lines for resumption of the match. If a competitor drops their *naginata*, the Chief Referee shall stop the match if the opponent does not immediately attempt to strike, and return both back to the starting lines, and then declare *hansoku* (for dropping the *naginata*).
5. The Chief Referee shall break up *seri-ai* if it is prolonged with neither player attempting to attack by announcing "*Wakare*", and immediately resume play on the spot.
6. The Chief Referee shall announce "*Yame*", and return the players to starting lines in the case of: Stipulated match time ending; *hansoku*; accident; or any other situation in which the match needs to be suspended. To resume the match, the Chief Referee shall announce "*Hajime*". If the match time must be extended (*encho*), the Chief Referee shall announce "*Encho-Hajime*".
7. Referees may decide victory/defeat by *gogi* (Referees' consultation).
8. Use of Flags:
   a. When starting a match, both flags are stretched out in front keeping them parallel to the floor, and lowered with the announcement of "*Hajime*". (Fig. 8).
   b. In the case of *yuko-datotsu*, the Referee raises the appropriate flag 45° to the side. (Fig. 9).
   c. When a Referee decides that a *datotsu* is not valid—contrary to another Referee's decision—the negating Referee shall swing the flags crosswise 2~3 times with arms stretched downwards. The red flag should be in front of the white flag. (Fig. 10).

   d. When announcing *yuko-datotsu* the Chief Referee shall raise the appropriate flag 45°. (Fig. 9).
   e. When a Referee announces stoppage of a match—she/he shall raise both flags straight up. (Fig. 11).
   f. When breaking up *seri-ai*—the Chief Referee will stretch both arms out either side parallel to the floor, announce "*Wakare*" (break), and at the same time as announcing "*Hajime*" will bring the flags out to the front and then drop them down. (Fig. 12 > Fig.8).
   g. In the case of *gogi*, the Chief Referee raises both flags in the right hand and announces "*Gogi*" to which the Referees shall gather in the centre of the court. (Fig. 13).

Note: Sub Referees, instead of the Chief Referee, may stop a match from proceeding by announcing "Yame" in the case of emergency or hazard prevention, discovery of foul play, and the end of match time etc. The Chief Referee will confirm and also announce "Yame" and return the competitors to the starting lines. However, only the Chief Referee can resume the match by announcing "Hajime".

9. Manner of Announcement/Declaration:
   a. Announcing the beginning of a match– "*Hajime*". (When both competitors are in full spirits after assuming *chudan-no-kamae*). (Fig. 8).
   b. Announcing *yuko-datotsu*– "*Men/Kote/Do/Sune/Tsuki Ari*". (Announced on the spot). (Fig. 9).
   c. Announcing the start for a second point– "*Nihon-me*". (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
   d. Announcing the beginning of the final point (when each competitor has 1 point)– "*Shobu*".(When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
   e. Announcing victory/defeat– "*Shobu Ari*" (victory decided). (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
   f. Announcing victory through the absence of the opponent– "*Fusen-gachi*". (Competitor at the starting line).

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

g. Announcing a single point victory– "*Ippon-gachi Shobu Ari*" (victory decided by a single point). (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
h. Announcing a prolongation of a match– "*Encho- Hajime*". (After the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
i. Stopping a match– "*Yame*". (Competitors stop where they are, then return to the starting lines).
j. In the case of *seri-ai*– "*Wakare*" (break) and then "*Hajime*". (Competitors stay where they are and resume on the spot). (Fig. 12 > Fig. 8)
k. Announcing *hansoku* – "*Hansoku ...kai*". (After competitors return to the starting lines).
Note: Indicate the violator using the hand. (Fig. 14).
l. Announcing a point created by accumulation of 2 *hansoku*– "*Ippon Ari*". (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
Note: An announcement of hansoku shall first be made to the violator, and then the flag is raised for the opponent and an announcement is made awarding the opponent ippon–"Ippon Ari". (Fig. 14 > Fig. 9).

m. Announcing victory/defeat after a point gained through *hansoku*–"*Shobu Ari*". (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
Note: An announcement of "Hansoku Nikai" shall first be made to the violator and then "Ippon Ari. Shobu Ari" (one point gained–victory decided) shall be announced in favour of the opponent.

Fig. 11

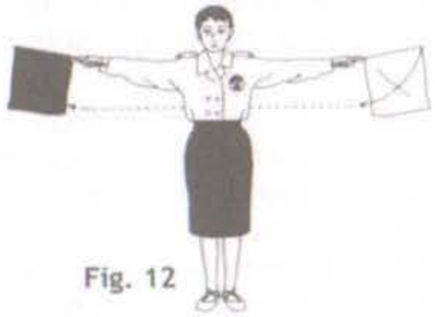


Fig. 12

Fig. 13

n. When a competitor requests to stop the match– "*Yame*". (Fig. 11).
Note: The Chief Referee shall raise both flags straight up and announce "Yame", and then ask the reason for requesting stoppage.

o. When a match is not decided– "*Hikiwake*" (draw). (When the competitors have returned to the starting lines).
Note: The Chief Referee shall announce "Hikiwake" with the 2 flags crossed overhead. (The red flag should be in front of the white). (Fig. 15).

Fig. 14

Fig. 15

p. In the case of *hantei* (deciding a winner when points are even)– *"Hantei. Shobu Ari"*. (After competitors have returned to the starting lines).
Note: Upon the announcement of "Hantei" by the Chief Referee, all the Referees shall simultaneously raise the applicable flag, and the Chief Referee shall announce "Shobu Ari".

q. In the case where a competitor is to be ejected from the match– *"Taijo. Shobu Ari"*. (When the competitors have returned to starting lines).
Note: The Chief Referee will hold both flags in one hand and point to the violator while announcing "Taijo". And then "Shobu Ari" in favour of the opponent. (Fig. 14 > Fig. 9).

10. Until the *yuko-datotsu* has been announced by the Chief Referee, the Sub Referees must not lower their flags.

ARTICLE 8. Referees shall handle matters other than those discussed in the preceding articles in mutual consultation (*gogi*) and seek the approval of Court Judge or Chief Judge.

ENGI RULES AND REFEREEING

1. *Engi Kyogi* Rules

Outline of *Engi*
ARTICLE 1. The objective of *Engi Kyogi* is to encourage the diffusion and development of correct Naginata. *Engi* shall be conducted in a stipulated match area, with pairs of competitors who performing sequences of *waza*.

Types of *Engi*
ARTICLE 2. The types of *Engi* shall be All Japan Naginata *Kata*, and *Shikake-Oji*.

Method of *Engi*
ARTICLE 3. The methods for deciding victory in *Engi* are *Hata-keishiki* (decision by raising flags), and *Saiten-keishiki* (decision by point scoring).
1. The forms to be contested will be designated from *Kata* or *Shikake-Oji*.
2. With *Hata-keishiki*, the superior pair shall be indicated with the Referees' red/white flags.
3. With *Saiten-keishiki*, the superior pair shall be decided by the Referees' marking. Going over or under the stipulated performance time will result in loss of points.

***Engi* Court**
ARTICLE 4. The *Engi* court should be the same dimensions as the following diagram. An area of 2 meters or more should be provided outside the court. The boundary shall be marked with white lines 5cm in width. The length of each side should be measured from the outer edge of the line.

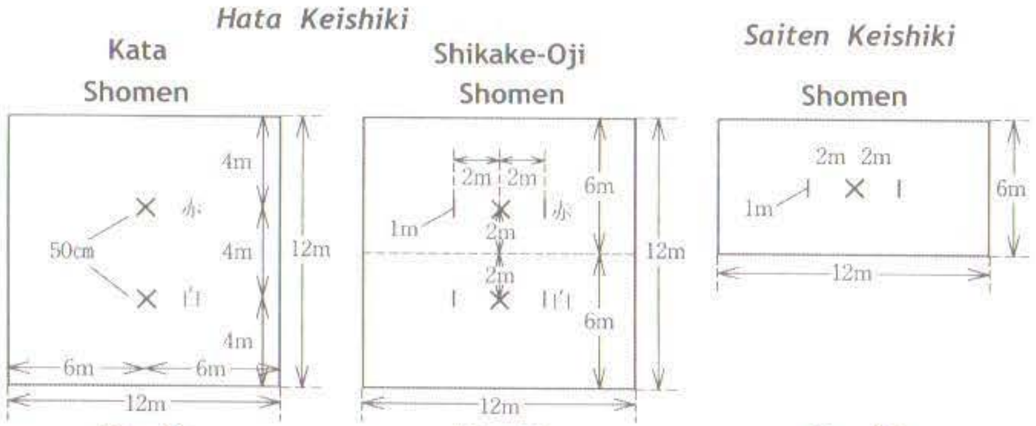
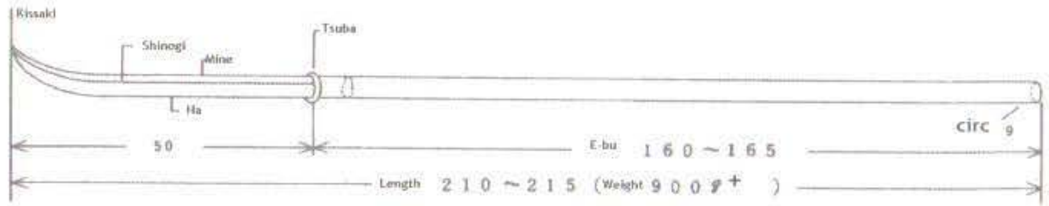


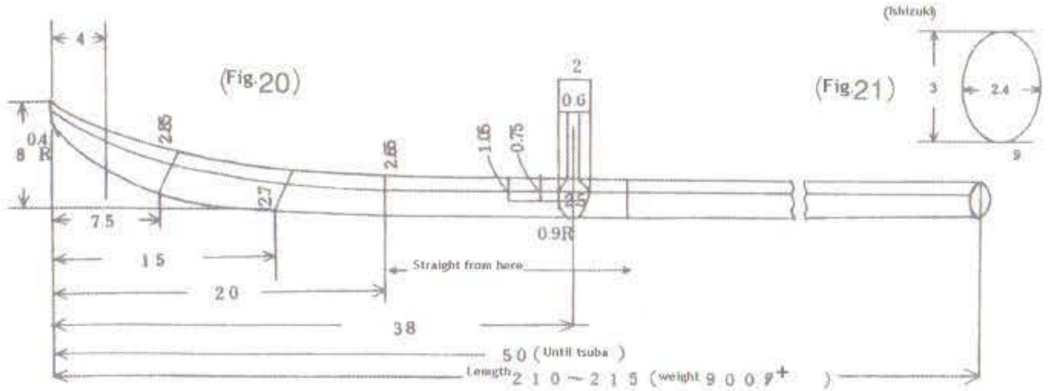
Fig. 16 Fig. 17 Fig. 18

Equipment

ARTICLE 5. *Kata* shall be performed with the All Japan Naginata Kata *naginata*. (Fig. 19), (Fig. 20), (Fig. 21). *Shikake-Oji* shall be performed with the *Shiai naginata*. (Fig. 2), (Fig. 3), (Fig. 4).

The Kata *naginata* used should be in accordance with the length, weight, and materials indicated in the diagram, and the shaft should be oval in shape. The *naginata* should not be coloured or engraved.





ARTICLE 6. The attire shall consist of a white *keiko-gi* (jacket) with a white *obi* (sash), and a black or navy blue *hakama* (split-skirt).

***Engi* Time**

ARTICLE 7. The time for *Saiten-keishiki* shall depend on the assignment, and will begin and end with the Chief Referee's signal.

ARTICLE 8. The time required for stoppage due to accident, or breakage of a *naginata* shall not be included in the performance time.

Beginning, Finishing, and Suspension of *Engi*

ARTICLE 9. *Engi* shall start with the signal for "*Nyujo*" (enter), and finish when all the competitors have exited the court.

ARTICLE 10. In the case of an accident, the Chief Referee shall suspend the match by signalling "*Yame*". This shall be carried out at the beginning of a technique.

***Datotsu-bui* (Striking Targets)**

ARTICLE 11. *Datotsu-bui* (Striking targets)

- *Men* (head) — *Shomen* (centre of the *men*)
- *Sayu-sokumen* (left and right men—between 25°-30° to the left and right of the centre of *shomen*)
- *Kote* (forearm)—left and right *kote* (5cm from the wrist)
- *Do* (trunk)—left and right sides of the torso
- *Sune* (shin)—left and right *sune*, inside left and right *sune* (the section between the knee and ankle)
- *Inko* (thrust (*tsuki*) to the throat)—throat
- *Wakibara*—left and right side of the body)
- *Suigetsu* — Solar-plexus

Deciding Victory/ Defeat or Ranking

ARTICLE 12. In *Hata-keishiki*, victory/defeat shall be decided by the majority of the 5 Referees' decisions. In *Saiten-keishiki*, rankings are decided by the scores of 5 Referees. (Precision of time is also be taken into account when scoring).

Engi Officials

ARTICLE 13. *Engi Kyogi* officials shall consist of the following: *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge); *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge); *Shinpan-in* (Referees); *Senshu-iin* (Competitor Callers); *Tokei-iin* (Time Keepers); *Hyoji-iin* (Indicators); *Saiten-keiji-iin* (Scoreboard Keepers); *Kiroku-iin* (Recorders); *Keiryo-yogu-iin* (Equipment Checkers), and so on.

ARTICLE 14. The *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge) shall make sure that the *Engi Kyogi* rules are being abided by properly. Also, the *Shinpan-cho* shall deal with matters that may not be clearly stipulated in the *Regulations*. The *Shinpan-cho* shall also handle any protests (*igi*) that are lodged.

ARTICLE 15. There shall be 5 Referees including 1 *Shushin* (Chief Referee).

ARTICLE 16. There shall be 1 head *Senshu-iin* (Competitor Caller) and 2 or more Sub Callers per court, who call players and inspect their equipment in order to get a match to proceed without undue delays.

ARTICLE 17. There shall be 1 head *Tokei-iin* (Time Keeper) and 2 or more Sub Keepers per court, who record the match time and informs the *Kiroku-iin* (Record Keeper).

ARTICLE 18. There shall be 1 head *Hyoji-iin* (Indicator) and 2 or more Sub Indicators per court, who accurately indicate the Referees' decisions.

ARTICLE 19. There shall be 1 head *Saiten-keiji-iin* (Scoreboard Keeper) and 2 or more Sub Scoreboard Keepers per court, who call out the competitors names before the match, and clearly mark the Referees' decisions.

ARTICLE 20. *Kiroku-iin* (Score Recorder)

1. In the case of *Hata-keishiki*, there shall be 1 head *Kiroku-iin* (Score Recorder) and 2 or more Sub Recorders per court, who record of the number of Referees' flags were

marked on the scoreboard.

2. In the case of *Hata-keishiki*, there shall be 1 head *Kiroku-iin* (Score Recorder) and 4 or more Sub Recorders per court, who collect the Referees' scorecards from number 1 to number 4 and pass them to the Chief Referee. After the scores have been calculated, they record the points and times, and check for inconsistencies.

ARTICLE 21. There shall be 1 head *Keiryo-yogu-iin* (Equipment Checkers) and 2 or more Sub Checkers, who check *naginata* length, weight, *sori* (curvature of the blade), and the leather cap on the *kissaki*, and so on, before the outset of matches.

Igi (Protesting)

ARTICLE 22. Nobody shall have the right to protest against the Referees' decision.

ARTICLE 23. A protest may be lodged with the occurrence of a problem occurring that is not mentioned in the *Regulations*, or when there is a difference in opinion in the interpretation of the rules. Also the person concerned may lodge a complaint of improper conduct to the *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge), *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge) before the next *Engi* match begins.

2. *Shinpan* (Refereeing) Rules

ARTICLE 1. The Referees shall decide rankings according to the All Japan Naginata Federation *Tournament Regulations*.

ARTICLE 2. There shall be in principle 1 Chief Referee with 4 Sub Referees.

ARTICLE 3. The duties of the *Shinpan-in* (Referees) shall be as follows:

1. The Referees must judge the competitors fairly on the quality of their technique, fullness of spirit, and the correctness of posture. Referees shall be seated in set positions and make their decisions independently.
2. In *Hata-keishiki*, rankings shall be decided by the majority of Referees' decisions. At the end of the *Engi* match, the

Referees shall indicate their decisions with the signal from the Chief Referee. (Blow of a whistle).

3. In *Saiten-keishiki* the Referees shall gather with the Chief Referee and discuss their point crediting after the first *Engi* match has been completed to ensure consensus. From then on, the Referees shall fill out and submit scorecards to the Chief Referee.
4. The Chief Referee shall check the difference in scores on the submitted scorecards. If the scores are varied, the Chief Referee's score shall become the basis, and even if *Engi* is in progress, a meeting may be held. If a meeting of the Referees fails to form an agreement in opinion, the matter shall be handled by the Chief Judge.
5. If a Sub Referee makes a biased or unfair judgement, the Chief Referee must issue a warning.

ARTICLE 4. In order to score accurately and straightforwardly, the following method should be applied:

1. *Engi* shall be judged as the best out of 10 points.
2. Scoring shall be based on attire/attitude, spirit, voice, breathing, *tenouchi* (grip), *datotsu* (striking), *ma-ai*, posture, position of hands, *zanshin*, and accuracy. If there are any faults in any of these aspects, 0.1 of a point will be deducted for each fault. In case of a major mistake 1 point will be deducted each time. The deducted points will be subtracted from the initial 10 points. The method for assessment is based on deduction rather than addition.

ARTICLE 5. The final score shall be based on the average of the 5 Referees' scores, and also from the accuracy of the time. If the timing is not perfect, 0.1 of a point shall be deducted for every 5 seconds out (under or over).

ARTICLE 6. The announcement of the score shall be done in the following manner:
The higher score shall be superior. If the scores are equal, the Chief Referee's scoring shall become the basis, and the Referees shall hold *gogi* (Referees' consultation).

Appendix 3:

Supplementary Notes to Tournament Regulations (Instructions for Shinpan-in)

Supplementary Notes to Tournament Regulations

1. Significance of the *Shinpan* (Referees)
2. Duties of the *Shinpan-in* (Refereeing Staff)
3. *Shinpan-in* Qualifications
4. Concept of the *Shinpan-ki* (Refereeing Flags)
5. Responsibilities and Duties of the *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge)
6. Duties of the Linesmen
7. Delivery of the Flags
8. How to Hold the Flags
9. How to Roll the Flags
10. How to Shift Positions in the Court
11. How to Pass the Flags
12. Tournament Area
13. Entry of the *Shinpan-in*
14. Exit of the *Shinpan-in*
15. How to Begin a Match
16. *Shinpan* Rotation
17. Other Instructions
    a. *Sendanmaki*
    b. Scoreboard Markers

(1) Significance of the *Shinpan* (Referee)

Naginata matches (*Shiai*) are regulated by the official *Tournament Regulations*, and are decided by the *Shinpan-in* (Referees). It is imperative that matches are judged fairly and that the tournament is administered impartially. The *Shinpan* must be respected by the competitors and spectators, as the attitude of the *Shinpan* must be conducive to the overall development and propagation of Naginata. Moreover, the cultural and traditional aspects of Naginata should be manifest at all times, even in the competitive arena.

(2) Duties of *Shinpan-in* (Refereeing Staff)

The *Shinpan-in* shall referee matches and decide the outcome in accordance to the official *Tournament Regulations* as stipulated by the All Japan Naginata Federation (AJNF). (See Appendix 1).

In the course of refereeing a match, the *Shinpan-in* decide the outcome by calling *yuko-datotsu* (valid strikes or thrusts) and also *hansoku* (fouls). They must make their calls accurately in strict observance of the *Regulations*. In *Engi* matches, the *Shinpan-in* shall ensure that the rules are observed, and decide victory or defeat by judging the superiority of *waza* (techniques).

(3) *Shinpan-in* Qualifications

The AJNF shall certify persons who are deemed suitable as *Shinpan* in accordance with the certification system. This system encourages *Shinpan-in* to constantly strive to judge fairly and impartially, and to seek continual improvement in refereeing skills. The ultimate goal is to advance the popularity of Naginata.

There are three categories of *Shinpan-in* certification:
Ishu (Type 1)- Persons who hold the title of *Kyoshi* and above, who have a high level of technical proficiency.
Nishu (Type 2)- Persons who hold the title of *Renshi* and above, who have a high level of technical proficiency.
Sanshu (Type 3)- Persons who are 3rd *dan* and above who have a high level of technical proficiency.

To become a certified *Shinpan*, the candidate must be recommended by their federation of affiliation, have completed the mandatory certification courses, and successfully pass the final examinations.

In order to attain official *Shinpan-in* certification the following points are essential:

1. The *Shinpan* must have a thorough understanding of the significance, purpose, and characteristics of Naginata, and have a high level of technical proficiency.
2. The *Shinpan* must have a thorough understanding of the official match rules and regulations.
3. The *Shinpan* must have a thorough understanding of

principles (*riai*) of Naginata.
4. The *Shinpan* must be skilled in the techniques of refereeing.
5. The *Shinpan* must be totally impartial.
6. The *Shinpan* must be in good health.
7. The *Shinpan* must be confident in their ability.

(4) Concept of the *Shinpan-ki* (Refereeing Flags)
The flags used while refereeing should not be considered merely as tools. They symbolise the authority and responsibilities intrinsic to refereeing.

(5) Responsibilities of the *Shinpan-cho* (Chief Judge)
1. Responsibilities:
The *Shinpan-cho* shall supervise and administer the *Shinpan-in* to see that refereeing is carried out properly according to the rules.

2. Duties:
a. The *Shinpan-cho* shall take all necessary measures to assure smooth administration of the tournament by maintaining close communication with the *Kyogi I-incho* (Chairperson of the Competition Committee).
b. The *Shinpan-cho* shall prepare refereeing directives (order etc.) and notify the officials before the commencement of the matches.
c. The *Shinpan-cho* shall notify the officials of any change in the lineup of *Shinpan-in* and decide who will referee the semi-finals and finals, and third place playoff.
d. The *Shinpan-cho* shall make decisions pertaining to any unexpected incidents which may occur during the tournament, but are not covered in any of the regulations or guidelines.

(6) Duties of the Linesmen
The Linesmen shall notify the *Shinpan-in* when a competitor steps out of bounds (*Jogai*).

(7) Delivery of the Flags
1. The *Shinpan-cho* shall hand over the refereeing flags to the *Shinpan-shunin* (Court Judge) before commencement of the matches.
2. The *Shushin* (Chief Referee) of the first match shall receive the flags form the *Shinpan-shunin*. The referees shall proceed in a line to the referees' waiting seats where the *Shushin* shall present flags to each Shinpan-in individually, starting with the *Fukushin* (Sub Referee) at the top seat.
3. After the matches have finished, the *Shinpan-in* shall return to the seats, and the *Shushin* will collect the refereeing flags from each of the *Fukushin* individually starting at the bottom seat. Then, the three *Shinpan-in* will return marching in single-file to the standby point. The *Shushin* will then return the refereeing flags to the *Shinpan-shunin*.
4. The *Shinpan-shunin* will then take the flags and return them to the *Shinpan-cho* after the matches have been concluded.

(8) How to Hold the Flags (*Shinpan-ki*)
1. The refereeing flags are held in the right hand when not in use. The edge of the cloth section shall be held fast with the index finger to keep it from unrolling. (See Fig. 1). Particular care is required by Linesmen to stop their flags unrolling as the shape of the cloth is triangular.
2. While refereeing, the handle of the flag should be held in the palm of the hand, with the index finger extended to touch the edge of the cloth. It should remain there when indicating judgment and the handle should be held in a straight line from the extended arm. (The wrists should not be twisted. (See Fig. 2).

Fig. 1

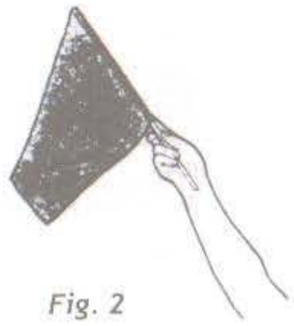


Fig. 2

(9) How to Roll the Flags
The white flag should be rolled once before being placed next to the unrolled red flag. The two should then be rolled together (white on the inside), so that only the red cloth is visible when completely rolled.

(10) How to Shift Positions in the Court
When the *Shinpan-in* rotate positions for individual matches, they should make a formal bow first then move holding the two flags together in the right hand. The flags should hang down naturally at the right side, and should not move when the *Shinpan* is walking to their destination.

(11) How to Pass the Flags
1. How to deliver the flags:
To deliver the flags, (which should be rolled together and held in the right hand), use both hands making sure that the handle is facing to the left. The right hand should hold the cloth section from the bottom, and the left hand should bee on top of the handle. (See Fig. 3a).

2. How to receive the flags:
When receiving the flags, take the handle from the top with the right hand, and the cloth section from the bottom with the left hand. (When lowering the flags to the side, the index finger of the right hand should hold the edge of the cloth in place to stop it from unrolling). (See Figs. 3a, b, c, d).

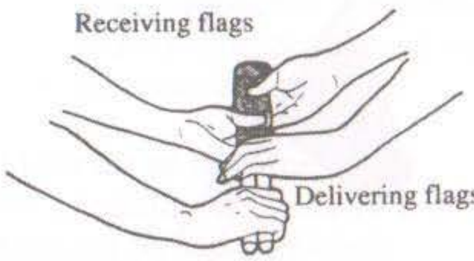


Fig. 3a

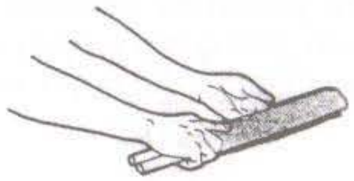


Fig. 3b

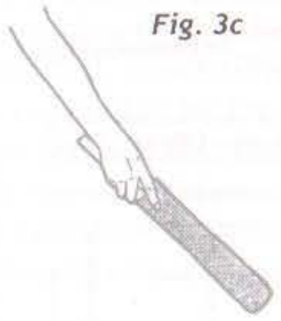


Fig. 3c

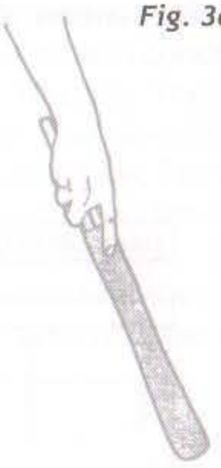


Fig. 3d

Note: The flags should be delivered in the same way regardless of whether they are in bundles of 3 (Shiai) or 5 (Engi). (See Fig. 5).

From *Shinpan-cho/Shinpan-shunin* to *Shushin*.

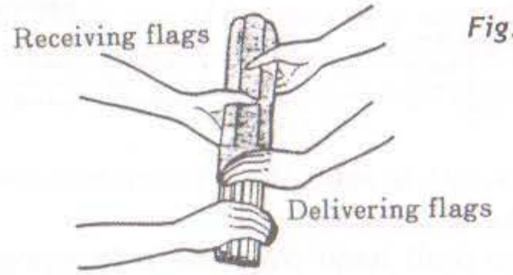


Fig. 4

From *Shushin* to *Fukushin*.

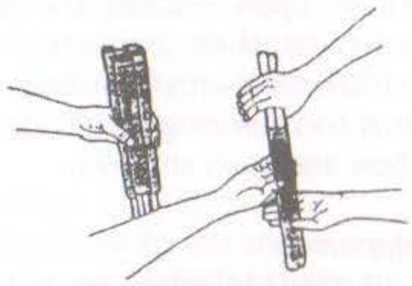
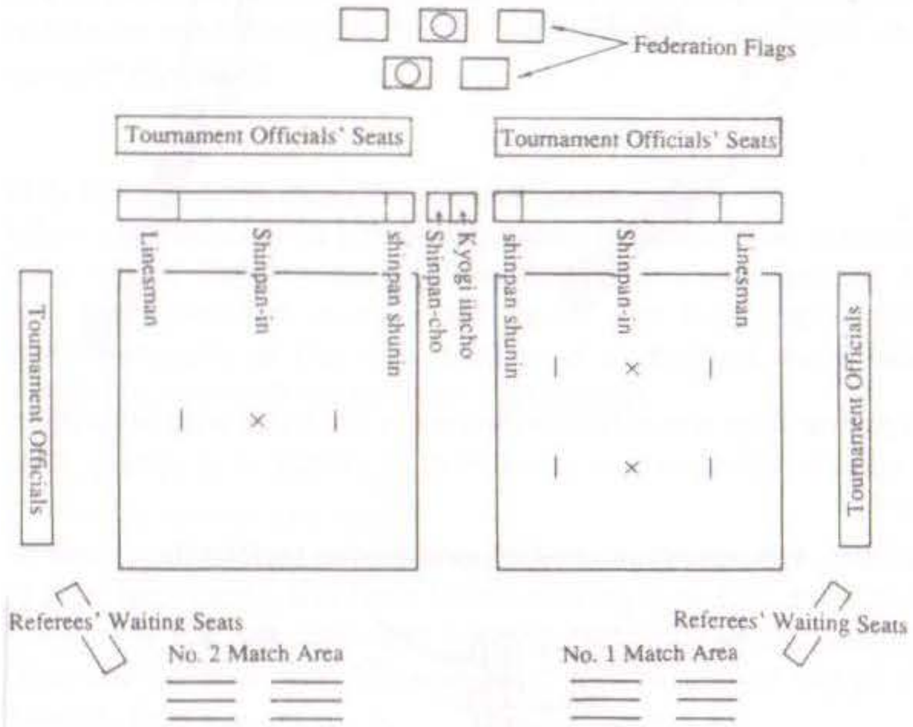


Fig. 5

(12) Tournament Area



(13) Entry of the *Shinpan-in*

The *Shinpan-cho* shall hand over the refereeing flags to the *Shinpan-shunin*. The *Shinpan-in* of the first match shall stand in a line at the Referees' standby point where the *Shushin* receives the flags from the *Shinpan-shunin*. The three *Shinpan-in* then proceed to the Referees' waiting seats in single file with the 2 Linesmen in front. Upon reaching the seats, the *Shushin* steps forward, about-turns, then conducts a mutual bow. The *Shushin* presents the *Fukushin* with their flags starting from the top, and then returns to their original position. The Referees conduct one more bow and then sit down.

(14) Exit of the *Shinpan-in*

At the conclusion of the individual or team matches, the Linesmen shall stand up, and all five officials shall conduct a

mutual bow. They will then roll up their flags, and proceed in a line to the *Shomen*. There, they will turn around and conduct a bow to the *Shomen* at the command of the *Shushin*. They will then return in a line to the waiting seats, the *Shushin* will take a step forward, about-turn and conduct a mutual bow. The flags will then collected by the *Shushin* starting with the Linesmen, and then *Shushin* will return to their original position. Then, the officials will return to the standby point together. The officials will disperse after the *Shushin* has returned the flags to the *Shinpan-shunin* and come back.

(15) How to Begin a Match

1. Team matches:

The competitors line up in the court. *Taisho* stands closest to the *Shomen*, with *Senpo* holding their *naginata*. The *Shinpan-in* step into the court and bow at the command of the *Shushin*. ("*Shomen ni rei. Otagai ni rei*"). The *Shushin* remains in the same spot and the *Fukushin* and Linesmen walk to their designated positions. The flags are then unrolled and a mutual bow is conducted. The Linesmen take their seats, and the *Shushin* will commence the match with the command "*Hajime*".

Note: The Linesmen unroll their flags at the same time as the Referees.

Before the second match begins, the next group of Referees stands in a line behind the first group. The next teams also stand in lines behind the preceding teams. At the command of the first *Shushin*, "*Otagai ni rei. Shomen ni rei*", everybody bows. The first group of Referees exit the court, and the next group take their positions. When both *Senpo* have taken the face-off position and are ready to fight, the *Shushin* will announce the commencement of the match with the command "*Hajime*".

2. Individual matches:

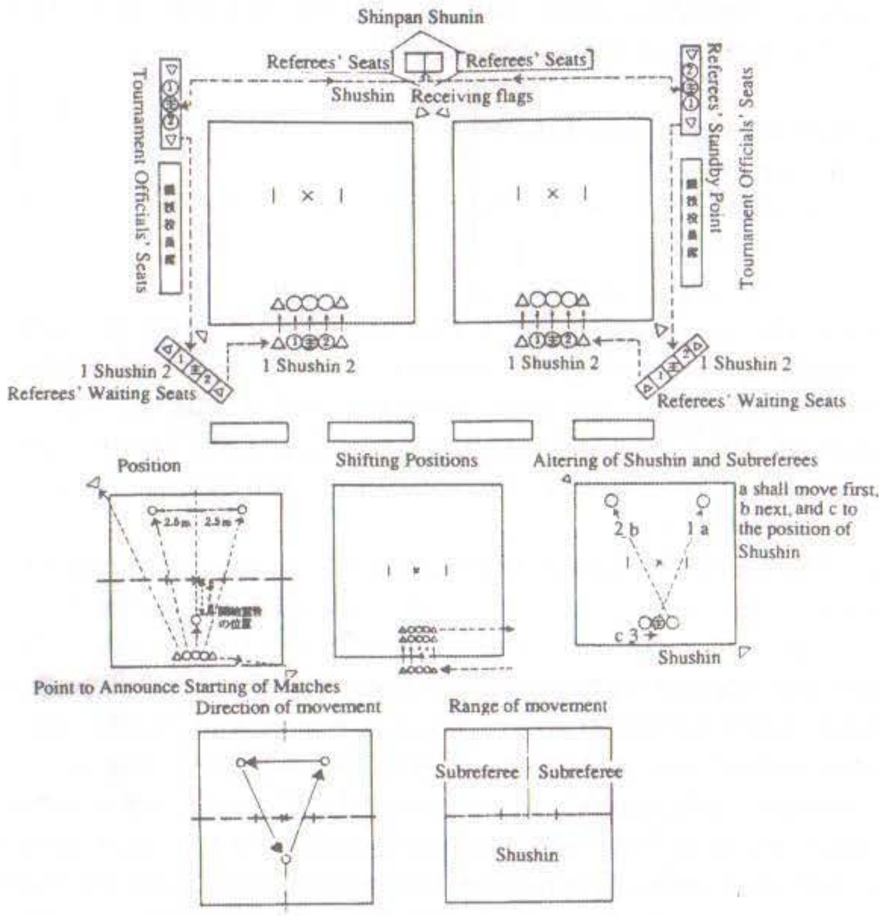
The *Shinpan-in* shall bow to the *shomen* and take their proper positions before the beginning of the match. The competitors shall proceed to the starting line at the call of the *Keiji-gakari*

(Scoreboard Keeper). After bowing to each other and assuming *Ai-chudan* (the face-off position), the match commences with the command of "*Hajime*" by the *Shushin*.

(16) *Shinpan* Rotation

1. *Shiai* Refereeing

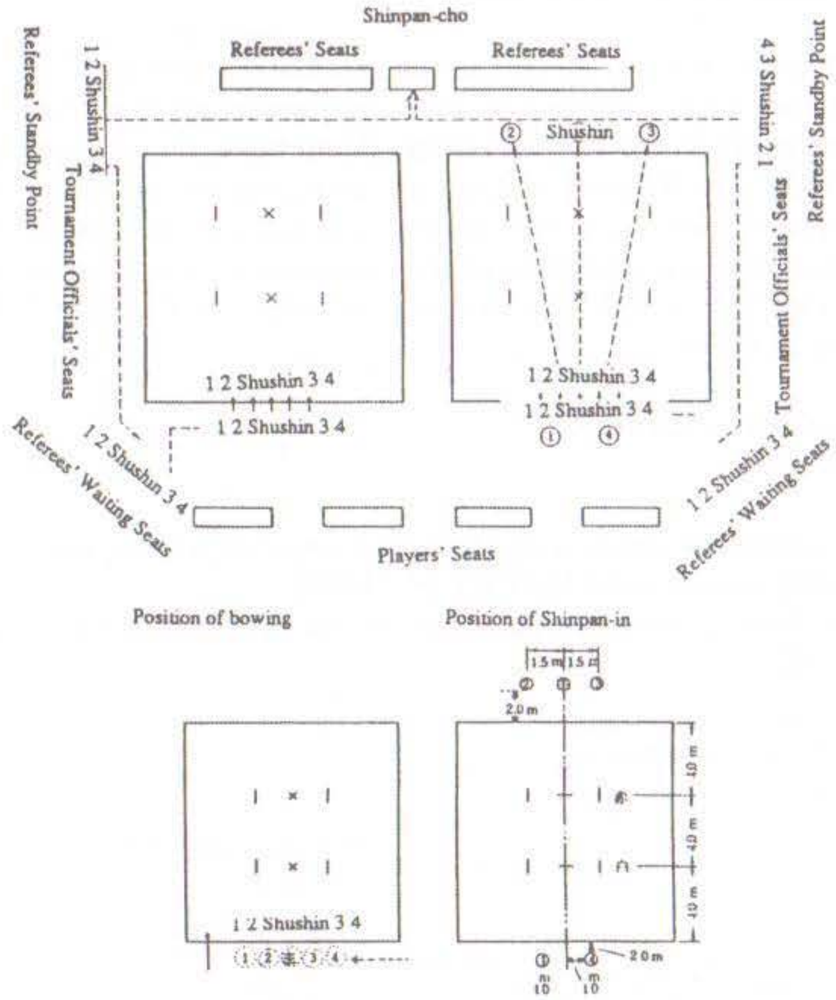
1) Match refereeing



* When rotating the role of *Shushin*, the lowest ranked *Fukushin* takes over first unless otherwise specified.

2. *Engi* Refereeing

Step into the court from the edge of the line.



* In the case of *Kata Engi*, no starting lines, only "X" will be marked on the court.

2. b. *Engi* Refereeing (*Hata-keishiki*)

The *Shinpan-cho* (or *Shinpan-shunin*) shall hand over the refereeing flags to the *Shushin* at the Referees' standby point. The Referees shall proceed to the waiting seats and receive the flags from the *Shushin* (in the same way as in *Shiai*). The Referees enter the court (also in the same way), bow to the

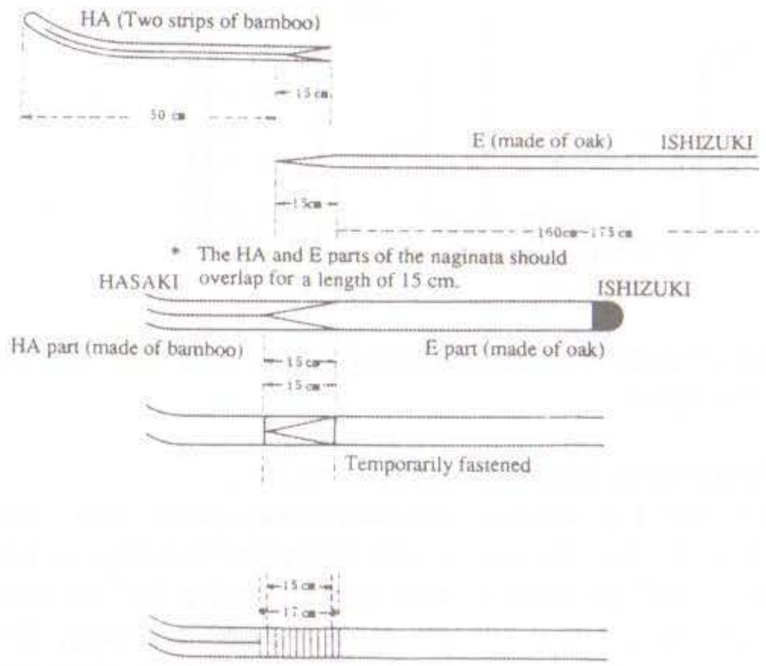
shomen, and move to their positions. The flags are unrolled and held in both hands, a mutual bow is conducted, and then the Referees take their seats.

Both teams enter the court at the command of the *Keiji-gakari*, and the *Engi* commences with the sound of the *Shushin's* whistle. When the *Engi* has finished and the winners have been decided, the *Shinpan-in* stand up, bow, and roll up their flags. They then line up at the original positions at the top of the court, bow to the *shomen* at the command of the *Shushin*, and then exit the court. The method for returning the flags is the same as in *Shiai*.

(17) Other Instructions

a. *Sendanmaki*

The adjoining sections are fastened together at two points by winding tape around tightly 2 or 3 times.
Then tape is wound around the entire section (15cm~17cm).



The tape is wound tightly twice over the section so that they do not come apart. Make sure all the parts are perfectly straight.

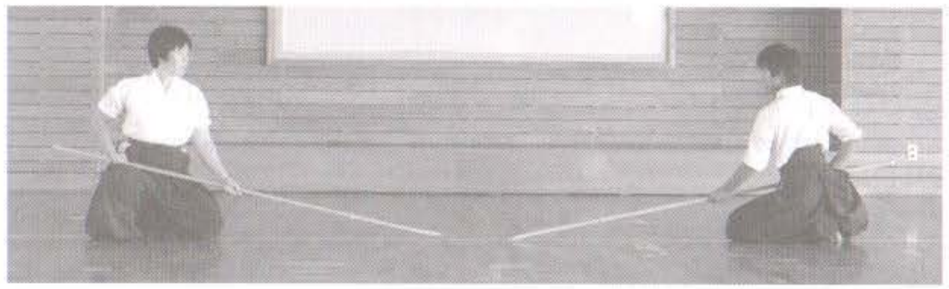
b. Scoreboard Markers

Men (Head)	㊋
Sune (Shin)	㊌
Kote (Wrist)	㊐
Do (Plastron)	㊎
Tsuki (Throat)	㊍
Hikiwake (Draw)	X
Hansoku (Penalty)	Δ
Hansoku Ippon (Point from two *Hansoku*)	㊒
Chui (warning- Two *Chui* = one *Hansoku*)	■
Hantei Ippon (Victory through referee decision)	㊓
Fusensho (Victory through absent opponent)	O O
Taijo (Expulsion)	㊔
Ippon-gachi (One point victory)	一本勝
Encho (Match extension)	㊑

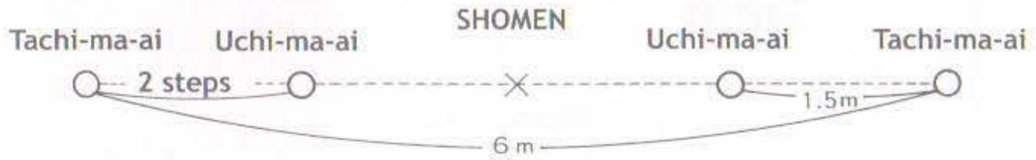
Appendix 4:

Kata Outline

Bow 30 degrees to the *shomen*. Then conduct a mutual bow from *tachi-ma-ai* and assume *mugamae*. Take two steps forward from the left foot, and on the third step both step into *ai-chudan*, pull the left foot back and kneel down on the left knee (*orishiki*). The blade is turned to the right (not touching the floor) while another mutual bow is conducted. Turn the blade back again while bringing the right foot up level with the left as both stand up into *mugamae*. From the left foot take three steps back to the *tachi-ma-ai*. The mutual bow from *orishiki* is conducted at the start and end of the *Kata*.



Mugamae: This is the *kamae* where the *naginata* is held on the right side of the body. Standing in *shizentai* (natural standing position) with the right hand holding the centre of the *e* (shaft), the left hand moves to grip the *naginata* just under the right hand and the *ha-bu* drops with the blade facing out and the *kissaki* covering the centreline of the body. The left arm comes across the body and the right hand grips the *naginata* from above. The *kissaki* is 10cm off the ground and the *monouchi* of the blade guards the centreline.



Uchi	Shi
Ippon-me	
(1) From *chudan*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, seize the opportunity and thrust to the solar-plexus while turning the blade to the left.	(1)' From *chudan*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, weaken the force of the *tsuki* by drawing the opponent's thrusting *naginata* diagonally downward to the left (*nayashi*) then thrusting it down with more force (*maki-otoshi*), following up with an immediate counter *tsuki* to the throat.
(2) *Zanshin*. Remaining alert, move back to the centre in *ai-chudan*, and draw the front foot back level with the back foot while assuming *mugamae*. Move back to the *tachi-ma-ai*.	(2)' *Zanshin*. Remaining alert, move back to the centre in *ai-chudan*, and draw the front foot back level with the back foot while assuming *mugamae*. Move back to the *tachi-ma-ai*.

Uchi	Shi
Nihon-me	
(1) From *hasso*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, seize the opportunity and cut *soku-men*.	(1)' From *gedan*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, then pivot on the back foot to spin around and face the opposite side as *Uchi's naginata* is knocked diagonally down (*harai-otoshi*).
(2) Using the momentum from the *harai-otoshi*, step forward with the left foot as the *naginata* is swung overhead (hands remain in the same position), and just as *Uchi* is about to move in for a follow-up attack, *Shi* makes a sweeping cut to *do*, and so Uchi is forced to move back out of the way.	(2)' Pivot to face the opposite direction with *fumikae-ashi* and make a sweeping cut to *Uchi's do* ending up with the right knee on the ground.
(3) *Zanshin*. Keeping distance, assume *chudan* (in *ayumi-ashi* or *okuri-ashi*).	(3)' *Zanshin*. Stand up and move back to the centre in *chudan*.

Uchi	Shi
Sanbon-me	
(1) From *chudan* take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, seize the opportunity and cut *sune*.	(1)' From *hasso*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, pivot on the back foot to spin around and face the opposite side while striking *sune*. Then, use the curvature of the blade (*sori*) to entwine then flick *Uchi's naginata* upward (*maki-age*) and cut *kote*.
(2) *Zanshin*. Move back to the centre in *migi-chudan*. Then spin the *naginata* around and into *mugamae* then returning to the *tachi-ma-ai*.	(2)' *Zanshin*. Move back to the centre in *migi-chudan*. Then, spin the *naginata* around and into *mugamae*, then return to the *tachi-ma-ai*.

Uchi	Shi
Yonhon-me	
(1) From *jodan* take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, seize the opportunity and cut *men*.	(1)' From *wakigamae*, enter the point of engagement, move back from the back foot to avoid the cut to *men*, then immediately step forward with the right foot and cut *men*.
(2) Step back from the back foot and receive the *men* cut with the blade, then force *Shi's naginata* down (*maki-otoshi*).	(2)' Use the momentum from the *harai*, and move forward to the diagonal left while executing *furikaeshi-sune*.
(3) *Zanshin*.	(3) *Zanshin*.

Uchi	Shi
Gohon-me	
(1) From *chudan* take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, *mochikae* and cut *do*.	(1)' From *jodan*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, then pivoting on the back foot spin around to face the opposite side and block the cut to *do* with the *ha-bu*. Then force *Uchi's naginata* down (*maki-otoshi*).
(2) Use the momentum from the *harai* and execute *furi-kaeshi-men*.	(2)' Pivoting on the back foot and turning to face the opposite side, knock *Uchi's naginata* down to the diagonal right (*uchi-otoshi*), immediately pull the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*), and thrust to *Uchi's* solar-plexus with the *ishizuki*.
(3) *Zanshin*.	(3) *Zanshin*.

Uchi	Shi
Roppon-me	
(1) From *chudan*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, and turning the *sori*, thrust to the solar-plexus.	(1)' From *mugamae*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* (left then right) to enter the point of engagement, then withdraw the left foot while catching (blocking) *Uchi's* thrust with the *ha-bu*. Then stepping forward with the right foot flick *Uchi's naginata* up (*maki-age*) and assume *jodan* while pulling the right foot back again.
(1)" Using the momentum from the *maki-age*, move back and assume *jodan*.	
(2)' Move back and thrust out the *e-bu* (*kuridashi*) to block the cut to *sune*.	(2) Step forward with the right foot and cut *sune*.
(Uchi 3) Move back into *hasso*, and then step forward to cut *soku-men*.	(3)' Move back and receive the *men* cut with the *ha-bu*, and then take another step back while forcing *Uchi's naginata* down (*harai*).
(4) Use the momentum of the *harai* and execute *furikaeshi-men*.	(4)' Move back to the diagonal left and deflect the *men* cut (uke-*nagashi*), then step forward with the left foot and cut *men*.
(5) *Zanshin*.	(5) *Zanshin*.

Uchi	Shi
Nanahon-me	
(1) From *hasso*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, and make a big diagonal right cut to *men* stepping with the right foot then the left (*kesa-giri*). The cut should stop just below *Shi's* left shoulder, then assume *migi-hasso*.	(1)' From *hasso*, take two steps forward with *ayumi-ashi* to enter the point of engagement, draw the left foot back while pulling the *naginata* in (*kurikomi*), and protect the body with the blade.
(2) From *hasso* make a big diagonal left cut to men stepping with the left foot then the right (*kesa-giri*). The cut should stop just below the right shoulder.	(2)' Draw the right foot back and protect the body with the *e*.
(3)' Draw the left foot back and protect with the *e-bu*.	(3) Step forward with the right foot and cut *kote* from below ending up in *migi-wakigamae* (the blade is facing down).
(4)' Draw the right foot back and protect with the *ha-bu*.	(4) Step forward with the left foot and cut kote from below ending up in *hidari-hasso*.
(5)' Bring the feet together, block the *men* cut overhead with the centre of the *e-bu*, and then step out immediately with the left foot and cut *sune*.	(5) Cut *men*.
	(6) Move back and block the *sune* cut with the *e-bu*, *maki-age* up, *harai-otoshi* down, and strike *sune* while moving out to the right.

(7) Zanshin. Move back to the centre in *ai-chudan*. Kneel down and bow. Stand up into *mugamae* and move back to the starting position. Stand the *naginata* upright and conduct one more mutual bow.	(7) *Zanshin*. Move back to the centre in *ai-chudan*. Kneel down and bow. Stand up into *mugamae* and move back to the starting position. Stand the *naginata* upright and conduct one more mutual bow.

Appendix 5:

Possible Examination Questions

The following topics are **based on** headings contained in the table of contents of the *Naginata Handbook*, published by the AJNF for practitioners to study for the written section of *dan* examinations. Most of the information required to write answers to these topics is contained throughout the pages of this book. Even though some of the questions overlap, it is expected that the candidate be able to answer with more detail as their rank advances. Please note that there is no guarantee that the following questions will be a part of your examination. This appendix was included to give the practitioner a general idea of the kind of questions to expect in an examination.

Shōdan

1. Explain why you started Naginata.
2. Explain the significance of *reigi* (etiquette) in Naginata.
3. Explain the method of performing *zarei* (seated bow) and *ritsurei* (standing bow).
4. Explain the structure of the *naginata*.
5. Why is warming-up necessary before training?
6. Explain the benefits of *kan-geiko* (mid-winter training) *shōchū-geiko* (mid-summer training).
7. Explain *shizentai*.
8. Explain the five *kamae* used in Naginata.
9. Explain how to do *chūdan-no-kamae* correctly.
10. Explain the different types of *tai-sabaki* (*ashi-sabaki*- footwork) utilised in Naginata.
11. Explain the *datotsu-bui* (targets) in Naginata.
12. Explain the different types of *suburi* (*happō-buri*).
13. What is meant by "close *ma-ai*" (*chikai-ma-ai*)?
14. What is *zanshin*?
15. Explain the differences between *kakari-geiko* and *gokaku-geiko*.
16. Explain important points when putting *bōgu* on.
17. Explain the various competitive events in Naginata.
18. How many meters apart are the start lines in *Shiai-kyōgi* and *Engi-kyōgi*?

Nidan

1. Explain the important factors for improving at Naginata.
2. Explain the characteristics of Naginata.
3. Explain the correct attitude required when training in Naginata.
4. Explain the mental and physical benefits gained through training in Naginata.
5. Explain the concept of "*fudōshin*" (immovable heart).
6. Explain the characteristics of *chūdan-no-kamae*.
7. Explain striking opportunities.
8. Explain striking methodology and the different ways for executing techniques.
9. Explain the importance of *uchikaeshi*.
10. Explain the method of *uchikaeshi*, and the benefits.
11. Explain the points which require care when doing *uchikaeshi*.
12. Explain the various kinds of *shikake-waza* and *ōji-waza*.
13. Explain *shikake-waza*.
14. Explain *ōji-waza*.
15. Explain the various different types of Naginata techniques.
16. Explain striking opportunities (*mittsu no yurusanai tokoro*—three unforgivable acts).

Sandan

1. Explain *te-no-uchi*.
2. Explain the importance of *kiai* and *hassei* (shouting while striking).
3. Explain the "*mittsu no yurusanai tokoro*" (three unforgivable acts—striking opportunities).
4. Explain the benefits of *mitori-geiko* (watching others train).
5. Explain the things that can be learned by being struck.
6. Explain *hōshin* (being liberated from tenacious thoughts or preoccupation, thus enabling effectiveness and concentration).
7. Explain the dangers of *shishin* (preoccupation with something).
8. Explain correct striking methodology.
9. Explain the characteristics of the five *kamae*.
10. Explain the significance and objectives of practising *kihon-dōsa* (basics).
11. Explain the objectives of practising *suburi* (practise swings).

12. Explain the fundamental moves in Naginata (Including bowing, footwork, striking etc.)
13. Explain the benefits of *renzoku-waza* (combination techniques).
14. Explain *shikake-waza*.
15. Explain the meaning of *ki-ken-tai-itchi*.
16. Explain the importance of *ma-ai* (distance).
17. Explain the importance of the concept of *ken-tai-itchi* (attack and defence as one).
18. Explain striking opportunities.
19. Explain what constitutes a valid strike (*yūkō-datotsu*).
20. Explain the importance of *kakari-geiko*.
21. Explain the different types of *keiko*.
22. Explain the ideal mindset for engaging in matches.
23. Explain what an ideal match would be.
24. Draw and explain the court used in *Engi-kyōgi*.
25. Explain what constitutes a *hansoku* (foul play) in *shiai*.
26. Explain the responsibilities of *Shinpan* (Referees).
27. Explain the significance of having three *shinpan* to judge a match.
28. Explain *mugamae*.
29. Outline the characteristics of the martial 'Way' of Naginata.
30. Explain the criteria necessary to be able to sit the *yondan* examination.
31. Explain the *shinpan-ki* (refereeing flags).
32. Illustrate the positions of *Shinpan* in *Shiai-kyōgi* and *Engi-kyōgi*.
33. Explain the positioning and composition of *Shinpan* in matches.

Yondan & Godan

1. State the official *Concept of Naginata* and analyse it in your own words.
2. Explain the objectives of studying Naginata, and the required attitude.
3. Explain the benefits to be gained from studying Naginata.
4. Explain the benefits of warming-up before training, and those of cooling down properly afterwards.
5. Explain *ma-ai*.

6. Explain the concept of *ki-gurai*.
7. Explain the concept of *heijōshin*.
8. Explain the meaning of *shiai* and *keiko*.
9. Explain the virtues nurtured in the individual through training in Naginata.
10. Explain the concept of *kogishin*.
11. Explain the meaning of *san-sappō*.
12. Explain the meaning of *suki*, *kan*, *kyo-jitsu*.
13. Explain *shikai* (the four illnesses).
14. Explain the concept of *shu-ha-ri*.
15. Explain the techniques (*waza*) of Naginata.
16. Explain *mittsu-no-sen*.
17. Explain the concept of *sei-chū-dō*, and *dō-chū-sei*.
18. Explain points which require attention when teaching Naginata.
19. Explain points which require attention when teaching *uchikaeshi*.
20. Explain the responsibilities of the officials of *Engi-kyōgi*.
21. State your opinions in regards to the propagation of Naginata.
22. Write about the importance of having knowledge of *jutsu-ri* (technical conceptual components of Naginata).
23. Explain the attitude required of an Instructor.
24. Explain the basic physical attributes required to do Naginata.
25. Explain the differences between Naginata and other sports.
26. Explain striking opportunities and coaxing the opponent into initiating an attack.
27. Explain the differences between the *naginata* and other weapons.
28. Explain the required attitude of *Shinpan*.
29. Explain the 'Tournament-method' of conducting matches.
30. Explain the 'League-method' of conducting matches.

Appendix 6:

Glossary of Naginata Terms

A

aite
Opponent, or partner.

ai-uchi
Striking simultaneously.

AJNF
All Japan Naginata Federation (Zen Nihon Naginata Renmei).

ashi-sabaki
Footwork. Examples include *okuri-ashi*, *ayumi-ashi*, *hiraki-ashi*, *tsugi-ashi*, *mae*, and *ato*.

atarashii naginata
The "new" post-war style of Naginata, which was created as a sport and for use in the education system.

ato
Backward movement.

ayumi-ashi
Footwork used for going forward and backward. When moving forward start with the right foot first and move four steps forward. When moving backward, start with the left foot first and take four steps back.

B

bōgu
The protective armour worn by Naginata practitioners. It consists of the *sune-ate* (shin protectors), *men* (head gear), *kote* (gauntlets),

dō (chest protector), and *tare* (waist protector).

bokken
Wooden sword.

bokutō
Wooden sword.

budō
The martial Ways of Japan.

C

chūdan-no-kamae
A stance or *kamae* which is considered the basis for all *kamae*, and is the most suitable for offence and defence. The body faces sideways and the *naginata* is held almost horizontally with the *kissaki* slightly raised and pointed at the opponent's centre line.

chūi
A warning given by the Chief Referee when a player first commits a foul. When a second violation is committed, however, the player receives a *hansoku* (foul).

counting
Ichi, *ni*, *san*, *shi*, *go*, *roku*, *shichi*, *hachi*, *kyū*, *jū* (1-10).

D

dan
Grade used in Naginata. (*shodan*, *nidan*, *sandan*, *yondan*, *godan* 1st -5th *dan*).

datotsu
The accurate strike or thrust made to specified targets on the opponent.

datotsu-bō
A small staff used as a target for students to practice the various strikes.

datotsu-bu
Striking section of the *naginata*.

datotsu-bui
Valid striking points or targets.

dō
The protective plastron for the mid-section of the body which is a valid target.

dōjō
Training hall.

dō-uchi
A strike to the mid-section of the body.

E

e-bu
The oak staff of the *naginata*.

e-harai
A technique in which the *e-bu* is used to sweep away the opponent's *naginata*.

Edo period
(1603-1867). Also referred to as the Tokugawa period.

enchō
A time extension utilised for a drawn match. In most cases up to three *enchō* are allowed before the match is decided by *hantei* (Referees' decision).

engi
Kata or pre-arranged moves. *Engi-kyōgi* refers to *Shikake-ōji* or *Kata* matches.

F

fukushin
A Sub Referee. Two Sub Referees assist the Chief Referee in deciding when points and fouls should be awarded.

fumikae-ashi
Footwork used for changing the direction that the body is facing on the spot when striking or counter-attacking.

fumi-komi
Stepping forward and stamping the front foot in striking.

furiage-men-uchi
An attack in which the attacker swings the *naginata* directly overhead and then makes a strike to the centre of the opponent's *men*.

furiage-kote-uchi
An attack in which the attacker swings the *naginata* directly overhead (to a lesser degree than for *men-uchi*) and then makes a cut to the wrist.

furiage-sune-uchi
A strike to the shin in which the attacker swings the *naginata* overhead and then brings it down on an angle to strike the *sune-ate*.

furikaeshi
An overhead strike which starts from *chūdan-no-kamae*. The *naginata* is spun overhead and brought down to strike the target. The circular motion makes it a representative technique in Naginata.

G

gedan-no-kamae
A *kamae* used mainly for defence and then counter-attack. The *kissaki* is lowered and being kept in line with the body's centreline, and held approximately 10 cm off of the floor. The *ha* should be facing up, and the *ishizuki* should be at the back with the rear hand held at ear height.

gōgi
Referee's consultation.

H

ha / ha-bu
The *naginata* blade section.

hachimaki
See *tenugui*.

hajime
"Begin". This is called by the Chief Referee in order to start a match.

hakama
The "split skirt" worn during *keiko*. It is made of cotton or synthetic fabrics and is navy blue or black in colour. The *hakama* should be ankle length.

hanmi
Side-on posture.

hansoku
A penalty incurred after committing a foul. The accumulation of two *hansoku* results in 1 point (*ippon*) for the opponent.

hantei
A decision made by the referees when the match cannot be decided by points. The winning point is awarded to the player who

exhibited greater skill in offence and defence, posture, manner, and had the least number of fouls.

happō-buri
Warm-up exercises performed at the beginning of *keiko*. Examples include *jōgeburi* (vertical), *naname-buri* (diagonal), *yoko-buri* (horizontal), *naname-buri shita-kara* (diagonal from below), and *furikaeshi* (overhead).

hara
The lower-abdominal region.

harai-waza
Techniques used to ward off an attack. The *sori* or curvature of the blade is typically used to sweep or knock the opponent's *naginata* away. The *e-bu* can also be used (see *e-harai*).

hassō-no-kamae
An offensive stance in which the *naginata* is held upward and slightly diagonal. The *ishizuki* is near the mid-thigh and in line with the body's centre, and the upper hand is at ear level. The *ha-bu* faces forward.

hidari
Left (direction).

hidari kamae
Kamae (stances) in which the left foot is forward. For example, *hidari-chūdan* refers to *chūdan-no-kamae* in which the left foot is in the front.

hidari-(ni)-hirake
A command to move to the left.

hikiwake
A draw.

himo
Cords used to tie the *bōgu* and *hakama*.

hiraki-ashi
Footwork used when avoiding a strike or responding. When moving to the left, step with the left foot and follow with your right. It can also be used for moving to the right with opposite stepping order and for changing directions.

hyōji-gakari
The official responsible for indicating the referee's decisions. The *hyōji-gakari* is assisted by two or more sub-indicators.

I

igi
A formal protest lodged to the Chief Judge or Court Judge.

INF
International Naginata Federation.

inkō
The throat, and target for a *tsuki* attack.

ippon
One point.

ippon-gachi shōbu-ari
"Victory decided by a single point". An announcement made by the Chief Referee after a victory has been decided by a single point.

ishizuki
The butt end of the *naginata*.

ishizuki-tsuki
A thrust to the throat or side of the body using the *ishizuki* end of the *naginata*. This technique is currently prohibited in matches, but is utilised in Shikake-ōji and Kata.

J

ji-geiko
Free sparring.

Jikishinkage-ryū
One of the predominant traditional styles of Naginata in the AJNF. As opposed to Atarashii Naginata, training in the traditional styles centres on *kata* repetition of the *naginata* versus other weapons such as swords, daggers and so on. Many Naginata practitioners train in a traditional style as well as the modern sports version.

jōdan-no-kamae
This *kamae* is considered the most aggressive stance. The *naginata* is held horizontally overhead with the *ishizuki* forward and aligned with the body's centreline. The *ha* is facing upward at the back.

jōgai
A foul incurred when a player steps his/her foot completely out of bounds.

K

kakari-geiko
Attack practise.

kamae
Fighting postures/stances. These include *chūdan-no-kamae*, *jōdan-no-kamae*, *gedan-no-kamae*, *wakigamae*, *hassō-no-kamae*.

kata
Set forms. The All Japan Naginata Federation has a set of official *kata* consisting of 7 sequences.

katana
A Japanese sword.

keiji-gakari
The Score Recorder. Assisted by two or more Sub-Recorders per

court, the Score Recorder keeps track of the score, match time, and the number of valid points (*yūkō-datotsu*) as well as the number of fouls.

keiko (o-keiko)
Training.

keiko-gi
Training jacket.

ken-tai-itchi
Attack and defence as one.

ki
Energy which enables the functioning of body and mind.

kiai
The spirited shout made at the moment of attack.

ki-ken-tai-itchi
Striking with the spirit, *naginata*, and body in unison.

kihon
Basics or fundamentals of Naginata.

kissaki
The tip of the *naginata* blade.

koshi-ita
The back panel on the *hakama*.

kote
The wrists or the protective gauntlets. Left and right *kote* are valid striking targets in competitive matches.

kuridashi
Pulling the *naginata* in.

kurikomi
Extending the *naginata* out.

M

ma-ai
The spatial distance or interval between opponents. *Tōi-ma-ai* (*tōma*)=long distance; *uchi-ma-ai* (*uchima*)=striking distance; *chikai-ma-ai* (*chika-ma*)=close distance.

mae
Forward movement.

makiotoshi-waza
Use of the *sori* to flick the opponent's *naginata* downward, taking away their power to attack, and then following quickly with a strike.

Meiji period
1868-1912.

men
The protective mask worn during *bōgu* practice and *shiai* which protects the head. It is also a valid striking target.

men-uchi
A strike to the head.

migi
Right (direction).

migi-(ni)-hirake
A command to move to the right.

migi kamae
Kamae in which the right foot is forward. For example, *migi-chūdan* refers to *chūdan-no-kamae* in which the right foot is in the front.

mitori-geiko
Watching training.

mochikae
Changing *kamae* from one side of the body to the other.

mochikae-sokumen-uchi
Alternating strikes to the left and right *men*.

mochikae-sune-uchi
Alternating strikes to the left and right shins.

monouchi
The part of the *ha* in which the targets must be struck with to be considered valid.

motodachi
Training partner who receives attacks, or who takes the role of instructor.

mune (mine)
The upper (concave) surface of the blade.

N

naginata
A weapon consisting of an ovate wooden shaft measuring approximately 6-8 feet in length with a curved blade on the end of it. The blade measured between 1 and 3 feet, and was sharpened on one side (the convex side). Also, the martial art in which this weapon is used.

naginata-ka
A practitioner of *naginata*. This term is seldom used.

nuki-waza
Techniques used to avoid (rather than block) an opponent's strikes.

O

obi
The belt or sash worn around the waist underneath the *hakama*. It measures approximately 2-3 meters in length (enough to wrap

around the body twice and tie at the back) and is made of bleached cotton.

ōji-waza
Counter techniques.

okuri-ashi
The footwork used when striking, and for moving in all directions.

R

rei
A bow of respect. Mental preparedness is required from the start to the finish of the bow. If bowing to the *shōmen*, the bow angle should be 30 degrees. The back should be kept as straight as possible when bowing. If bowing to an opponent, then an angle of 15 degrees should be used while maintaining eye contact at all times. The feeling of respect for one's opponent must be maintained at all times.

ritsurei
Standing bow

ryū / ryūha
Martial schools or traditions.

S

san-bon-shōbu
A three point scoring method used in matches.

sayū-dō-uchi
Strikes to both the left and right sides of the body (*dō*).

sayū-sokumen-uchi
Strikes to both the left and right sides of the head (up to 30 degrees either side of the centre of *men*).

sayū-sune-uchi
Strikes to both the left and right shins.

seiza
The formal sitting (kneeling) position. The knees should be approximately five inches apart (for men), and together for women, with the two big toes crossed (or touching) at the back.

seme
Attack or apply pressure on the opponent.

sen-dan-maki
The section of the *naginata* at which the *ha-bu* is attached to the *e-bu*. This joint is held firmly in place by wrapping it several times with white plastic tape.

sensei
Teacher

senshin-in
Linesman.

senshu-gakari
The person who calls the players out onto the court. The *senshu-gakari* also inspects the player's equipment ahead of time to make sure that all is in order so that no delays occur.

seri-ai
Engaging at close quarters.

shiai
Competitive matches.

shidō
Instruction, guidance, direction.

shikake-ōji
The incorporation of basic movements and *waza* into pre-arranged sequences. The attacker is called *shikake*, and the defender is *ōji*.

shikake-waza
Offensive techniques.

shinogi
The side of the *naginata* blade.

shinpan
Referee.

shinpan-shunin
The Court Judge. It is the Court Judge's responsibility to act as an assistant to the Chief Judge when there are more than two courts in use at the same time.

shinpan-chō
The Chief Judge. The Chief Judge's responsibility is to make sure that the match rules are abided by.

shizentai
Natural standing position. *Shizentai* enables you to react quickly to your opponent's movements, and is a free and stable posture.

shōbu-ari
"Victory decided". All matches end with the Chief Referee declaring either "*shōbu-ari*" or "*hikiwake*" (draw).

shōgō
Ranks awarded after *godan* in the order of Renshi, Kyōshi, and finally Hanshi, which is the highest possible rank in Naginata.

shōmen
The centre of the face or head. This word also refers to the altar or sacred place in the *dōjō*.

shushin
The Chief Referee.

soku-men-uchi
A strike 30 degrees to the left or right of *shōmen*.

sori
The curvature of the *naginata* blade.

sōtai
The position held by two opponents who are facing each other in *shizentai*. The opponents should be 4 meters apart.

suki
Weakness or opening.

sune
The shins. They are a valid striking target in competitive matches.

sune-ate
Shin protectors worn during *bōgu* practice and *shiai*.

sune-uchi
A strike to the shins.

T

tachi
Sword.

taijō
An ejection from a match.

tai-sabaki
The footwork used when moving the body and when striking.

tare
The waist protector worn during *bōgu* practice and *shiai*.

te
The hand

Tendo-ryū
One of the predominant traditional styles of Naginata in the AJNF. As opposed to Atarashii Naginata, training in the traditional styles centres on *kata* repetition of the *naginata* versus other weapons such as swords, daggers and so on. Many Naginata practitioners train in a traditional style as well as the modern sporting version.

te-no-uchi
Grip or use of the hands to manipulate the *naginata* when striking.

tenugui
A protective head wrap worn underneath the *men*. It absorbs sweat and prevents chafing.

tokei-gakari
The Time Keeper in a match. The Time Keeper is assisted by two or more Sub-Keepers.

tsugi-ashi
Footwork used when striking from a distance or when you want to reduce the *ma-ai* quickly.

tsuki
A thrust with the *kissaki* or *ishizuki*. Thrusting to the throat is prohibited until age eighteen. *Ishizuki tsuki* is prohibited.

U

uchikaeshi
A basic *kihon* exercise for repetitive striking of *men* and *sune*.

W

wakare
Command to separate.

waki-gamae
A *kamae* in which the *naginata* is held horizontally with the *ishizuki* forward and in the centreline of the body. The *ha* faces outwards at the back.

waza
Technique.

Y

yame
Stop.

yūkō-datotsu
A valid strike.

Z

zanshin
Maintaining physical and mental alertness after attacking.

zarei
Bowing from the *seiza* (seated) position.

zekken
Name patch attached to the front flap of the *tare*.

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